

Blenheim Was First Well Settled Area

By ART WILLIAMS

In 1791 the Constitutional Act divided Quebec into Upper and Lower Canada, Col. John Graves Simcoe becoming the first Lieut-Governor of the province of Upper Canada in 1792. Upper Canada was divided into four districts which were known as the Easter or Johnstown District, Midland or Kingston District, the Home or Niagara District and the Western or Detroit District. These in turn were divided into nineteen counties.

In this land division, York County in the District of Niagara extended west to the Thames River and included Blenheim and Blandford townships as part of its west riding. Blenheim was described as lying to the northward, of Dundas St. opposite Burford.

In the year 1798 by an act of parliament, the townships Burford, Norwich, Dereham, Oxford upon the Thames, Blandford and Blenheim were to be known as the county of Oxford and to form the District of London along with the counties of Norfolk and Middlesex. This district is described as the land west of the Niagara District to the south of Lake Huron and between a line drawn due north from a fixed point where the easternmost part of Oxford intersects the river Thames until it arrived at Lake Huron.

This District lasted until 1837 when an act of parliament declared that as soon as a jail and courthouse could be erected the townships of Zorra, Nissouri, Blandford, Blenheim, Oxford, Burford, Oakland, Norwich, Dereham and the town of Woodstock would form the Gore District. The first court for the district was held in Woodstock in 1840.

Of the townships of Oxford, Blenheim is considered to be the first that was settled to any great extent. Simcoe invited a friend and fellow patriot in the American Revolution by the name of Watson to come to Upper Canada and he and his friends and relatives would be given a township to settle in. With this promise, Watson sent his son Thomas Watson who was accompanied by his cousin Thomas Horner north in 1793. Keeping his end of the bargain Simcoe ordered three concessions of Blenheim township to be surveyed by Surveyor Jones and his Indian party on their arrival.

WAITED SURVEY

They waited for the survey to be completed and then chose a site for a mill which they were obliged to build in order to receive this land and as proof of their good intentions. When they returned to the States, Thomas Watson had no intentions of returning but Horner did and spent some time along the border. He eventually arrived at Albany, New York where he purchased material for his mill and help to build it and after a very strenuous trip arrived at what is now Burlington by boat. Here they built sleds and with the aid of oxen pulled their material along the Indian trails to Brant's Ford and then on to what is now Princeton and commenced building the first mill in what is now Oxford County along a stream which still bears his name and is called Horner's Creek. As far as it is known the present Woodstock District Boy Scout camp is very near the old mill site.

The mill was got up and in working order late in 1795 but before the mill operated the dam broke and from the scarcity of hands it could not be rebuilt until 1797. It is surmised that these men either returned home or else had taken up land and couldn't spare the time. In 1797 Horner got the mill going and the first plank was cut and the old Horner house which was known as the Old Homestead was built from lumber cut at this mill.

Horner erected a grist mill also the first in the county. The mill accidentally burned in 1809 and was never rebuilt. A saw-mill was still in operation sixty years later with Leil Martin as the owner.

When these mills were in operation Horner was in the position to claim his township, he, having at great loss, faithfully performed his part of the contract, in fact he was in possession as possession went in those days but Simcoe's successor would not acknowledge his claim and he like Ingersoll in Oxford was chisselled out of their townships.

The first lot sold by the government was sold to William Wardue and was lot 10 concession 14. The concessions ran from east to west and were 24 lots in length. The sideroads divided the township into quarters and were known as the East Quarter Line, Centre Line Road and West Quarter Line.

The first settlers were from the United States as immigrants from the Old Country had not traversed this far west. They came chiefly from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Vermont States and by 1817 the population of this present county was 530 with most of them in the Oxford on the Thames township and by 1822 there was only one school in Blenheim and the present Springhill School is believed to be the original school but was located on what is now known as No. 2 highway and known then as the Governor's Road.

TRAVELLING PREACHER

As early as 1802 a Methodist preacher travelled through Blenheim and as a result a Methodist Class was formed. In the early 1830's Rev. G. Murray, a Presbyterian minister settled in Blenheim and gave a site for a church on the southwest corner of his farm. This organization would probably get its start shortly after the one in Zorra which was the first Presbyterian church in the county.

The story of Blenheim would not be complete without a few lines about Thomas Horner. He was born on March 17, 1767 at Bordentown, New Jersey, then a British colony and was married in 1801 by Col. James Ingersoll. After getting civilization started in Blenheim township and receiving his squatter's 200 acres of land was appointed Capt. of the Norfolk Militia in March 1798 and on June 16, 1806 was appointed by General Brock as the out-Deputy Lieutenant of the Coun-

ty of Oxford, but was removed break of the war 1812. He was classed as an unloyal American. Not to be beaten he waited his time and when Col. Norton was having troubles getting Indians to serve with Brock he went and recruited 75 Indian warriors who he took into action ignoring the order that Gen. Hull of the American army would not give a quarter to any man found fighting beside an Indian. After two weeks' service he was dismissed and with his Indians sent home but they only got part way when they were called back. He bore the whole expense himself. The following winter when General Winchester was advancing against Detroit, Horner went as a private.

On July 8, 1820 he became the first representative for Oxford in the eighth Parliament of Upper Canada and remained the representative until 1832 when Charles Ingersoll defeated him but on the death of Ingersoll Horner was re-elected and was a sitting member when he died of cholera in August 1834 at his home in Burford.

REGISTRY OFFICE

In 1800 a registry office was established for the counties of Oxford and Middlesex in pursuance of an act passed in August 1795 and Thomas Horner was then appointed Registrar. The office was kept at his residence in Burford. The fees for the first year amounted to about eight dollars, there being but three deeds to record. The first was for a lot in Burford. Horner was registrar for about eighteen years for Middlesex and Oxford and later for the county of Oxford until his death in 1834.

The village of Princeton was first laid out in the year 1853 by William A. Gissing and Manuel Freeman and it was surveyed by W. G. Wonham. Lots sold for \$50.00 to \$100.00. Streets were usually named after early settlers such as Gissing, Cowan, Palmer, Murray and Roper with the usual patriotic names such as King, Queen and Prince St. There is also a Simcoe St.

In ten years' time this location had several stores, a shingle and a stove factory, three hotels and several workshops. The original Anglican church was a frame structure and later the present brick building was erected in 1866 costing \$3000.00 and seating 600 people. A similar procedure was followed by the Methodist congregation in 1854 costing \$1200.00 and seating 300 people. The present Roman Catholic Church has been in Princeton for about seventy years.

In 1862 Thomas Cowan organized a company of soldiers for local protection in case of an invasion. About 1867 they were incorporated as the No. 3 Company of the 22nd Battalion of Oxford Rifles prior to the war of 1914-18 there was a company of Mounted Rifles training at Princeton.

In 1866 a fire swept through the village but was quickly rebuilt and boasted six hotels, a dentist, a drug store and a photographer over the usual shops. As the village progressed it moved northward in the vicinity of the railroad.

The post office opened prior to 1839 and was known as Blenheim. The postmasters were William Grinton, John Thompson, Thomas Ryal, Alex Milnne, John G. Lindsay, H. C. Forsyth, F. Galbraith, F. Vicker, J. Crosby, GERALD ROY CARSON.

On Saturday Feb. 22, 1890 carried a dispatch that two farmers living near Princeton while chopping wood in a timber swamp had come upon a frozen body with two bullet wounds in the head. All identification marks were removed from the clothing by a knife and the pockets were empty. Nearby was found a cigar case which bore the initials F. C. B. The body received an anonymous burial at Princeton and from this find came one of the most publicized murder cases of modern times known as the

incomplete re Birchall trial



OXFORD'S GHOST TOWNS

During recent months, as *Sentinel-Review* photographer Ted Town went about his regular assignments, he's been gathering photos of the vanished settlements that are the ghost towns of Oxford County. Another is Blink Bonnie: located in Blenheim Township on County Road 42 east of Plattsville, Blink Bonnie was probably named by a "son of Auld Scotia." It was a place name in Falkirk and Gladsmuir,

Scotland. The designation is apparently the equivalent of the French *Belle Vue*. A post office was moved to the intersection of County Roads 42 and 22, the site of Chesterfield. Only an old school house and a few homes mark the site today.

W.J. Wintemberg, reprinted from the Ontario Historical Society's *Papers and Records*, Volume XXII, 1925.

SENTINEL REVIEW
May 6, 1988

Bright Named For Statesman

SETTLEMENT in Bright began as early as 1830. Platts-ville Station was the original name, dating from the appearance of the railway some time around 1840.

It was not until 80 years ago, however, that the community ceased to be a satellite of Platts-ville proper (now an enterprising community in Oxford County), and became known as Bright.

George Baird was responsible for this. He had emigrated to Canada to set up a shoe manufacturing plant in Chesterfield. He gave this up to establish a saw mill at Plattsville Station. He laid out the village and named three of the streets after his three sons, John, George and James (as they are still known). Then, upon his suggestion, the hamlet was named Bright after John Bright (1811-1889), a prominent English orator and statesman.

As the land was cleared Bright became more and more a dairy centre. One of the first cheese factories was founded there as a co-operative company. It is still operating.

It is believed that the first Methodist church was built in Bright in 1865, but there were several other denominations numbered among the population in later years. The one church, now the United Church, in the village ministers to most of the residents, and most other sects have disappeared.

Bright

By ART WILLIAMS

On July 16, 1792 Lieut. Gov. Simcoe issued his proclamation dividing Upper Canada into 19 counties. The townships which form Oxford County today being attached to York and Norfolk Counties. The county of York, to which the townships of Blenheim and Blandford were attached, consisted of all land bounded on the east by the most westerly line of a tract of land belonging to the Mississauga Indians, running north 45 degrees, west to the Thames River; on the south side to Lake Geneva (Burlington Bay) and a carrying-place leading through the Mohawk village to where it intersects the river Thames, thence up the same river to the northwest boundary of a tract of land belonging to the Mississauga Indians. Six years later the township of Blenheim and Blandford along with Burford, Norwich, Dereham and Oxford on the Thames were incorporated as Oxford County and to form the London District, along with Middlesex and Norfolk and all the land that lay west of the Home and Niagara Districts to the southward of Lake Huron and between them and a line drawn due north from a fixed boundary where the most easterly end of Oxford intersects the River Thames until it arrives at Lake Huron.

The District of London was first represented in parliament in 1804 at the third Parliament of Upper Canada (no record exists of an earlier representative). The election was held at Averills Mills (now Waterford) in the township of Townsend with the Hon. David William Smith and Richard Corkwell as candidates. Smith was elected and was appointed speaker of the house.

BLANDFORD SETTLED

Up until this time, most of the settlers in the county were located in Oxford-on-the-Thames or in the southern part of Blenheim and it was not until about 1830 that Blandford began to be settled. The first survey was

made by Augustus in 1797 and the surveys were not coming settled up the Huron, Milton and Galloway settler to settle the Blandford township by what is now highway 97 was a settlement by the Baird who arrived in 1830 and settled near to become Chesterfield early settlers were in 1852 and Reiskin, Broughton and came from Norfolk, about 1836 settling in County and came to about 1842.

To George Baird credit of the name of the field being chosen for the community that lies on the being Blenheim and Oxford and is still the location of the Chesterfield United Church. The name is in honor of Lord Chesterfield, an English nobleman. Baird later became the first storekeeper and postmaster. Charles Decker was the last postmaster when the postoffice closed in 1914. By 1836 Chesterfield was being served by the Presbyterian minister of Ayr and West Dumfries and a log kirk was built. In 1855 a brick church was built; the clay for the bricks being obtained from the present farm of C. M. Woolcott, one-half mile west of the church. In appreciation of the good work done, the three masons were each presented with a pocket bible by the session. In 1850 the session consisted of James Fairbairn, James Swan, and James Hatchley and one of the early ministers was Rev. W. Robertson. As was usual in those days a cemetery was laid out so that settlers could be laid to rest where they worshipped. The first grave at Chesterfield was for a child of Robert Brown. There being no minister in attendance Mr. Brown conducted the service and the mourners joined in the prayers and hymns.

It is interesting to note that at this church a member of the session was barred from membership for six months and from the session for gathering a n overflow of sap on Sunday. He was later re-elected to the session. It shows how devoted these early Scotch settlers were to their religion. Many of these same settlers would walk miles to church carrying their shoes with them and as they neared the church they would wash their feet in a creek, put on their shoes and proceed to church.

MAIL SERVICE

This village received its mail from Hamburg and Plattsville daily at 11 in the morning presumably by stage which at one time was driven by Ed. Gatzkal of Plattsville who made two trips a day to meet the train at Bright.

A native of Chesterfield, who went forth to pioneer in other parts of the world was D. B. Chome Oliver who went to India as a medical missionary.

Bright, like Hickson, owes its existence to the fact that even in those days finances played a bigger part in the choice of a route than did already settled villages and it was considered more economical to build a station on the choice site offered at the community now known as Bright than to build the necessary bridges and right-of-way into the already prospering village of Plattsville. When the decision for the southerly route was made, the station took on the name of Platts Station but

Baird, who had come to live at this settlement was instrumental in having the name changed to Bright after John Bright, a prominent English statesman at that time.

The Grand Trunk Railroad which ran a line from Buffalo to Goderich to speed up travel to the west opened this line up about 1857 and the first train went through with flags flying and the station was gaily decorated and crowded with people who were really thrilled as the wood-burning locomotive steamed through at the fantastic speed of six miles per hour. The coming of the railroad was a big asset to these people as they had a surplus of wood and this was a good outlet for it both in the roadbed as ties and as fuel for the monsters of the rails. It also gave them a handy outlet for their surplus crops and livestock and therefore shipping day became the big day of the week.

GREAT FUTURE

When George Baird moved to Platts Station he foresaw a great future for this hamlet and laid out the village pretty well as it is today and named three streets after his sons, John, George and James. He built a sawmill which prospered right from the beginning and with a good supply of fuel on hand Baird soon opened a stove factory which was operated by steam and at one time employed about 40 men with the power being supplied by a 12 horsepower steam engine.

It was sometime after the coming of the railroad that schools made their appearance in Bright. Mrs. Alex Scott conducted a primary school and the older students had to go to Ratho, Blink Bonnie or the tenth line school for their education. After the Baptist Church closed following the ministry of Rev. John Geerie it was purchased in 1870 to be used as a school and in 1875 it was decided to build a new school and the village fathers proceeded to raise 2,094 dollars by debentures to which residents who wished their children to attend this school contributed from 50 cents to two dollars as their share while others donated labor and teams. The school was built and remained until it was removed in favor of the recently erected new school on the same site.

During the life of this school it is interesting to note the following; until 1904 the school operated on a budget of less than \$1,000.00 and in 1898 a motion was put on the books asking that a fee of one cent a day be charged all students from outside the school area. In 1900 the trustees were allowed to loan school funds and collect interest as no money was kept in the banks as there was no bank in the village and they did not favor paying by cheque. In 1906 and 1907 it was decided to teach the equivalent of first and second year high school in this

school in order to obtain a bigger school grant; and it was not until 1935 that hydro was installed in the school.

STORES AND SHOPS

Bright, being a railway centre, was well supplied with stores and shops as well as hotels for the traveller. Today the Arlington Hotel is still operating the name being changed from the Anglo-American Hotel which was run by William Cuthbertson in 1867. In 1863 a postoffice was opened with William A. Sharpe as postmaster and mail was received off the trains from the east and from the west and stage service connecting it with Plattsville. Today mail is received from Woodstock by truck twice a day and T. Cuthbertson is the seventh postmaster to serve the village.

Bright is one of the few communities that can still boast of a cheese factory which is still making cheese. The original

Bright Co-operative Cheese Factory was to the south of the village and early in the 1890's a new plant was built on the present site where Max Smith, the present cheesemaker, makes cheese daily.

Although it is divided down the main street into Blandford and Blenheim townships, it is the home of the Blandford Township Council which located here shortly after Woodstock withdrew from the township and council at that time were meeting at Bond's Corners.

The religious needs of the community were served by the Wesleyan Methodist and the Baptist. The Presbyterians received their spiritual education at Chesterfield until the Church union and later held services in the hall in Bright. The first Methodist Church was built in 1865 and was served by the Plattsville mission. The Methodist ministers or circuit riders as they were called would often open the meeting by saying "I am a Methodist preacher and my manner of worship is to stand while singing, kneel while praying and to stand while preaching to the people who are sitting." For their troubles and travels these saddle bag preachers received varying amounts for their duties varying from \$1.50 and an order for a pair of overalls to \$32 and 23 pairs of socks. Of course they were boarded free of charge wherever they stayed and were all single for at least four years after they started. The spinsters of that time showed their intentions of not wishing to remain so by trying to win the attention of the riders by keeping him well supplied with socks or home spun clothing. The Plattsville circuit consisted of Plattsville, Mount Carmel, New Hamburg and Bright. Later Bethel and Washington were

linked with Plattsville while still later Bright, Bethel and Chesterfield formed the charge of the United Church after church union. The present church was built in 1892 at a cost of \$5,500 and the first couple married were Mr. and Mrs. James Cassidy on February 10, 1895.

The coming of the motor age saw the decline of railway traffic and this village has met the fate that has been dealt to scor-

es of similar hamlets with industries moving to larger centres and now it prefers to be known as a quiet country village in the north of Oxford where a stranger is always made welcome.

BRIGHT CHEESE FACTORY STILL OPERATING



BRIGHT IS STILL one of the few communities that can still boast of a cheese factory which is still making cheese. In the **TOP** photo Max Smith, the present cheesemaker, checks some of the cheese in storage while in the **CENTER** PHOTO Jack Wetflauer turns the curds in the vat. The **BOTTOM PHOTO** shows the exterior of the factory. (Staff Photos).



OXFORD'S GHOST TOWNS

During recent months, as *Sentinel-Review* photographer Ted Town went about his regular assignments, he's been gathering photos of the vanished settlements that are the ghost towns of Oxford County. Another is Caledon: located in Blenheim Township, Caledon was never a

town, but rather an area of land deeded in 1842 for use as a burial ground for the early Scottish settlers of the area. It was named after the Caledon hills in Scotland. It lies at the intersection of Blandford-Blenheim Road 4 and Blenheim Road.

SENTINEL REVIEW

May 12, 1988

Two Major Fires Have Not Halted Drumbo's Progress

By ART WILLIAMS

How did Upper Canada receive her revenue? During the first year of Governor Simcoe's administration, there was practically no revenue to meet current expenses. After considerable correspondence with the some government commissioners were appointed, who met at Montreal on February 18, 1795. An agreement was made which was to continue in force until the year end of 1796. By this agreement the province of Lower Canada was to settle all claims and demands of Upper Canada which the latter had on account of duties levied on wines during the two preceding years.

The province of Upper Canada agreed not to impose any duties on goods imported into Lower Canada and passing into Upper Canada and was to allow Lower Canada to impose such duties as was reasonable and necessary. Upper Canada was to receive annually one-eighth of the net proceeds of such revenues. In 1795 Upper Canada's share was £1,205 2s 10d, in 1796, £1,040.

At this period no taxes were collected but a revenue was raised from licenses issued to taverns and shopkeepers who sold wines and spirits and also pedlars and auctioneers. A tavern license cost 16s and by 1793 was increased to 20s. In the year 1831 there were 340

innkeepers who paid from 3 to £10 for a license for a total of £3,643. Shopkeepers licensed to sell spirits paid £1,505, hawkers and pedlars on foot paid £5 annually and those who travelled on one horse £10, two horses £15. The total received from this source was £520 less collectors' allowance of £26. This was levied on 41 foot and 31 horse pedlars. Twenty-five auctioneers each paid 5 pounds for a license together with a duty levied on all sales.

Land was now taxed at the rate of 1 penny on the pound according to the assessed value fixed by law, which was every acre of arable, pasture or meadow land was valued at one pound, uncultivated land 4s and all town lots were valued at £60.

GOVERNOR'S ROAD

Governor John Graves Simcoe was a firm believer that war with the United States was inevitable. One of his first acts of preparedness was to order the building of a military road from Hamilton to Detroit by way of London and this was known as the Governor's Road and ran along the southern boundary of Blenheim township. In this district he also ordered the surveying of the three concessions of Blenheim north of this road. This was the beginning of a great era for the now Oxford County in that it brought Thomas Horner into Canada. This man went on to become one of

the most important men in the London district even though he was classed as an undesirable by the staff of General Brock. He was able to command the respect of both settlers and the Indians. He was able to raise a company of Indian warriors after the British had failed and his word was the unwritten law to the majority of the settlers. He was later placed in command of the Oxford Militia and later went on to represent the settlers of Oxford in the provincial government. At the time of his death he was also registrar of this area.

About 1832-33 saw the arrival of Scottish settlers on the fifth concession, some coming by way of the lakes and others came by way of Paris and these settlers started settlements at Howells Mills, Canning, Showers Corners and Richwood. The first settlement at (the Windfall) Drumbo was a log house built by Squire Henry Muma in 1843. He was an agent for a man by the name of Street who held the deed for the land on which Drumbo is now located. Among the early settlers who followed Muma into this area were families of Barr, Dr. J. B. Rounds, Melich, Hazel, Baldwin and Herbert.

SCHOOL

A log school was built at the corner of what is now Oxford and Wilmot Streets. It burned down and one of its teachers was Charlotte Muma. The second school was erected on the corner of the Armstrong farm and Mr. Hill was the teacher.

Mr. Muma had the first survey of the village made in 1851 and had the town hall built near the old Molson Bank block. Mr. Muma was also the originator of the first Blenheim Agricultural Show in 1854. This was the same year that the railroad from Buffalo to Goderich was surveyed.

From the period of 1854-1862 Drumbo grew rapidly and was very prosperous until June 6, 1862 when a great fire broke out. This fire started in the stable of the Central Hotel about 10 a.m. of Thursday June 6. This was the second fire at this same spot as the original school was burned here. Henry Muma was the principal loser in that he lost 11 buildings of importance plus a number of barns and sheds. Among the buildings lost were the Warner House, occupied by Messrs Fay and Demars. It was a complete loss and they carried no insurance. Mr. Hill's grocery and provision store which was partly insured, the J. W. Clark's drug and stationery store, com-

plete loss no insurance, Mr. Murray's general store, little saved, partly insured, J. Burton's boot and shoe store, he had insurance, The Review Office, complete loss no insurance, Dickson's Clothing Store, little damage but no insurance, the new Hall complete loss, no insurance, the storehouse of R. S. Mann, complete loss, Baldwin's Boot and Shoe Store complete loss, no insurance, Mr. Muma's office, along with a large new building which was only partly finished already at a cost of \$3,000. Also lost was the building of G. W. Clark, no insurance. North of Hill's store was a building occupied by Mr. Gillespie the lawyer who managed to save most of his things but the next shop occupied by F. E. Warren, a harnessmaker was a complete loss, the Railway hotel occupied by A. C. Cornell was burned but nearly all the contents were saved, the Central Hotel occupied by R. Robinson was a complete loss with no insurance, a store belonging to D. McInnes and Co. and three occupied by James McKenzie along with a drug store, jewelers, telegraph and post office, as well as houses belonging to many of the residents. In all 22 families were left homeless, Henry Muma's losses were \$25,000 and Mr. Mann's \$15,000. The fire would have consumed more but was kept from four or five buildings by a fire engine brought up from Paris. This catastrophe had laid two of the principal streets in ruins, the village lost over 50 business places.

SECOND FIRE

Within two years, fire was again to strike and again Mr. Muma was a big loser when on Sept. 18, 1864 a hotel and a large store were destroyed. These fires were a serious setback to the village and for some time afterwards vacant cellar spots reminded the residents of

the grim ordeal that the village had passed through. The only bright spot was the brick yard of C. A. Muma and W. Stevenson which kept 20 hands busy from May to November. This yard shipped bricks to all parts of the county as well as neighboring cities and towns. If it had not been for this source of employment Drumbo could have passed out of existence.

tained where available. There is frequently keen rivalry between schools and teachers (all male) when the teachers sought to show the highest marks at the qualifying exam which were made up by the local supervisors and trustees."

In 1876 the Baptist Church was erected and in 1878 the Royal Hotel was back in business and in July, 1878 business was back to normal and a Board of Trade was started and the Board of Trade induced Mr. Wrigley of St. Thomas to locate his newspaper here. Prior to the coming of this weekly (the Advertiser) the business men published a business chart which contained the ads of local stores. The following interesting article is taken from an old newspaper:

"Before the middle of the nineteenth century great progress had been made in educational matters in Blenheim township, the township had been divided into school sections, school houses have been erected and qualified teachers ob-

There has been speculation as to how Drumbo got its name the following is authentic information: Squire Jackson, one of the earliest pioneers of the township of Blenheim and a Dr. G. W. Ynne who was being sent by the government of Upper Canada to establish post offices in the county of Oxford. As these two men were driving toward the settlement of "the Windfall" as it was then called, the contour of the land, resembling the back of an ox reminded Squire Jackson of Drumbo in Ireland and they decided on the name Drumbo, (Drum-bo means ox-back).

The first postmaster was George Hicks when the post office opened on February 1st 1854. He served until May 1854 when Francis Blancher took over. Among the postmasters who have served for 20 years or more we find J. L. Burgess, from 1871-1892; A. Laidlaw,

from 1899-1922; William Ainslie, from 1923-1935 and Marshall Gidney from 1935-1956 in all 11 postmasters have served Drumbo.

CHURCHES

The first Baptist Church which was the first Blenheim Church was known as the Riverside Baptist Church and was organized in 1828 and a church building was erected at the banks of the Nith River on the fifth line. Fred Burnett gave the property for the church and Henry Rupert gave the ground for a cemetery after the death of his daughter. In 1856 it was decided to have the Riverside chapel moved to the Windfall but in the moving the roof collapsed and therefore a church was built on the spot where the rink was later built about 1860. In 1876 a brick church was built and it is interesting to note that there was a strong Baptist movement all through the township.

The Methodists a d d l e b a g preachers were also active in Blenheim and when word was received of their coming the settlers would gather in large numbers and as time went on churches were built. In 1857 the Methodist congregation built a church which could seat 200 people. These were known as the Primitive Methodists. In 1861 the Wesleyan Methodists also built a church.

The Church of England (Anglican) also had a congregation here and in 1868 they built the white brick church now known as St. Peter's. It was situated on land given by Henry Muma and was dedicated in 1870. The church closed in 1895 but an annuity from the estate of Mr. Sprague whose name was given to the old winding road, between Galt and Paris (Sprague's Road) enabled the church to reopen on the stipulation that a definite number of services be held each year. This church has the only church bell in the

Drumbo

village, it being the gift of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Meredith in memory of those who served in the First War. It was dedicated in 1937.

Drumbo had a company of the Oxford Rifles at the time of the Fenian Raids of 1866. Later the village supported a company of the 38th Battalion (the Dufferin Rifles of Brantford). Captain J. T. Cockburn was the last company commander when the Dufferin Rifles became a city regiment in 1885.

In sports one of the outstanding events were the hockey games played between Drumbo's two all-girl hockey teams at the turn of the century. Among the players we find Pearl Hall, Stella Meggs, Lizzie and Lillie McTaggart, and Mae Blumenstein, Pearl Wait, Edith Sippel, Edna Rapp and Annie Fritch.

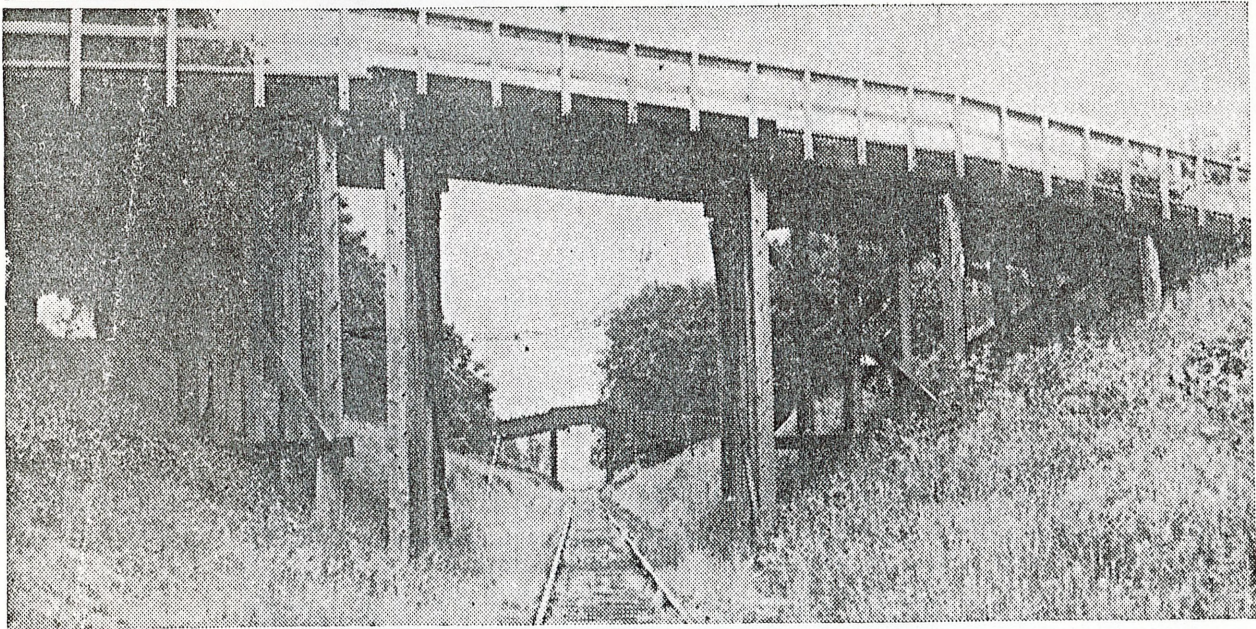
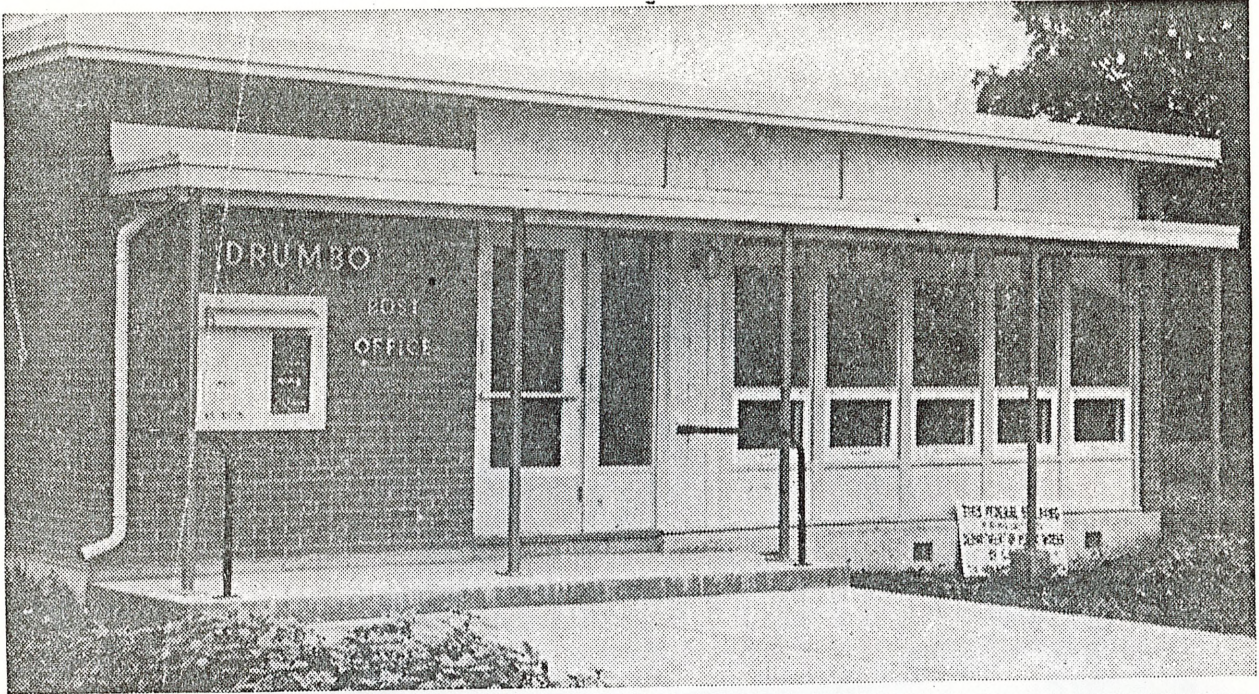
Drumbo was made a police village in 1904. The first trustees were J. J. Pickard C. Taylor, C. A. Muma. Among the first clerks of the Division Court held in Drumbo were Squire Jackson in 1852 and W. H. Landon in 1862.

Drumbo has come a long way since it was first made a police village being ideally located on a main railway line and more recently has been connected with one of the main highway arteries of the province, this being Highway 401. While these modern improvements tend to draw people to the larger centres Drumbo still is able to boast of being a community in which anyone would be proud

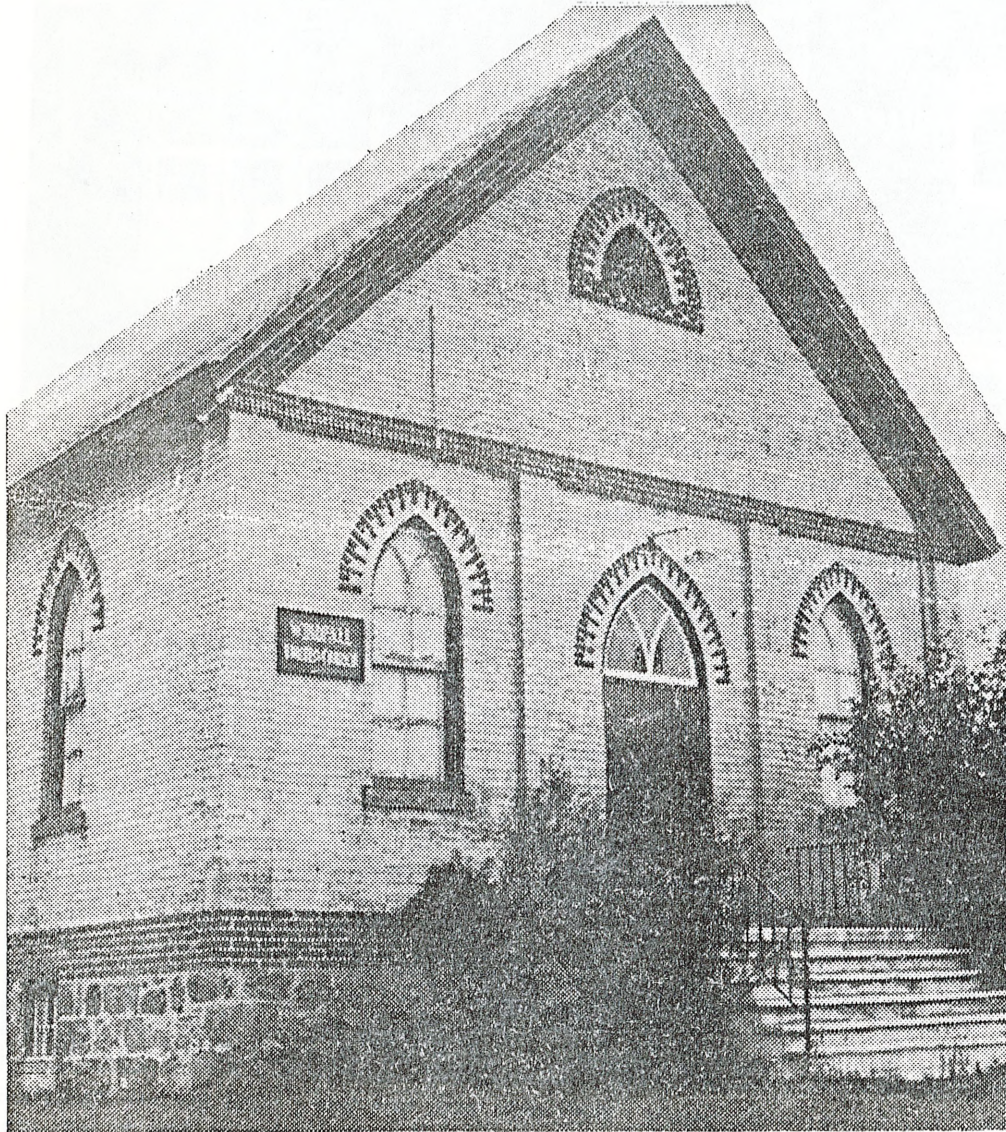


When the railroad came to Drumbo it built three bridges to allow traffic to cross the tracks. Two of the bridges, which were made of planks, have been now replaced by modern steel structures. The plank bridge above is the lone one remaining while in the back ground can be seen a modern steel bridge. (Staff photo)

DRUMBO AS IT IS TODAY



THE VILLAGE of Drumbo has kept up with modern times. **TOP** photo, in keeping with the times, the Federal Government recently completed this new post office building. **LOWER** photo, one hundred years ago this street scene would have been one of fire scarred buildings as this is the section of the village that was destroyed by fire on June 6, 1862. (Staff Photos)



DURING THE early history of Oxford County, Drumbo was known as Windfall. When the name Drumbo was adopted for the village the congregation of this church kept the name of Windfall. It is located on the Drumbo-Inn-erkip Road. (Staff Photo)

66% of wells tested in Drumbo polluted

By ALISON DOWNIE
of The Sentinel-Review

DRUMBO — More than 80 village residents attended a meeting here Tuesday night where they were told more than half their wells are polluted.

The news didn't come as a surprise for the residents many of whom have indicated they'd like to see improvements made to water supply in the village.

An independent engineering firm is doing an in-depth study on water and sewer disposal problems in Drumbo for Oxford County and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE). Preliminary findings were presented at a meeting last night at the Drumbo Agricultural Hall.

Of 130 wells tested, 85 failed chemistry or bacteria tests, said Kenn Smart of K. Smart Engineers Ltd., Kitchener. He said 78 per cent of the wells in the village were tested.

"Water supply should provide water free from high total coliform and any fecal coliform levels, low in sulphates, nitrates, hardness and fluoride," Smart explained, saying that 67 per cent of the dug wells and two of the four drilled wells that were

sampled failed to provide adequate results.

The high fecal bacteria counts and nitrate levels are indicators that effluent from sewage systems may be draining into shallow aquifers, the engineer said.

A high percentage of home owners who took part in the survey had complaints about water supply, Smart noted. Of the 105 people who filled out questionnaires, 47 said they want water improvements, while 64 said they would help pay for improvements.

'Chemically safe'

"There is a need to find a supply that is chemically and bacterially safe," Smart stated, adding problems exist uniformly throughout the community.

Sewage disposal investigations were also carried out by the engineering firm. Based on current

MOE requirements for sizing of tile beds, only 16 of the 104 properties surveyed have adequate area for a tile bed and that's assuming the soils are suitable for a standard septic bed, Smart explained.

Fifty-three homeowners surveyed indicated they want improvements made, and 64 said they would be willing to help pay for improvements. Seven people said they would like to see a sewer system for the downtown area only.

Inadequate lot sizes exist throughout Drumbo for tile bed disposal, said Smart. Sixteen of 18 downtown lots surveyed lack sufficient area for a conventional septic bed.

Storm drain discharge investigations revealed high levels of fecal and total coliform from catchbasins and drain outlets with numbers increasing downstream. The reconstruction of County Roads 3 and

29 will not provide for hook ups of private drains to storm drains if waters are septic, Smart explained. Storm drains could back up into weepers if connected, he said.

Private drains carrying septic waters (sink, laundry or toilet waters) cause pollution in storm drains and should have an alternate outlet either on the lot or in a communal collection or treatment system.



Smart

Solutions to the problems identified will be examined in the next phase of the study, said engineer Marg Murray.

CONTINUED ON PAGE NINE

Alternatives are many, and definitely varied

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Possible alternatives for the water problems cited by the engineers range from doing nothing to developing new wells. The three possible solutions K. Smart and Associates will be looking at closely, include:

- new shared drilled wells;
- develop a few existing wells for the community with mains on all streets;
- or drill a few new wells for the community with mains on all streets.

Alternatives that will be scrutinized for sewerage include:

- individual corrections and a partial sewer system for downtown;
- individual septic tank effluent pumping system leading to a municipal treatment system;
- and municipal sewer system where individual plumbing leads to a municipal sewer system.

For connections to storm drains the alternatives that will be looked at closest will be:

- put basement weepers into sump pump and sanitary drainage to septic tank;
- municipal sewerage system just for drains;

- or municipal sewerage system just for County Roads (oversizing for future connections.)

Residents at the meeting had a few questions about cost, but engineers said there won't be any cost estimates until the second phase of the study is completed. It was noted that the MOE will subsidize water and sewage projects up to a maximum of 85 per cent which is available to municipalities with a population of less than 1,000. Drumbo's population is slightly more than 500.

Oxford County engineer Stewart Watts told residents they will have input into the final decision. Approval will also have to be given for any alternatives chose by the Township of Blandford-Blenheim council, Oxford County council and the MOE.

One resident asked if a fire protection system would be considered in the alternatives and Smart said it could be, but installing hydrants means increased costs. "It will be examined," he said.

The next public meeting will likely be held in September, suggested Murray.

SENTINEL

Review

June 22, 1988

Drumbo

May 24/1978

GENERAL

THE JENVEY FILES

Research from the files of Bryan G. Jenvey

Continued From Last Week
EASTWOOD

Henry Vansittart brought money with him from England and collected more here, for the erection of the Old St. Paul's Anglican Church in Woodstock. This church was built in 1834 on land donated by Colonel Drew in 1832.

Vansittart built a show farm at Eastwood and imported high class Short-horn cattle and fancy horses. His house had everything available at that time. He died there in March 1843 at the age of 65 years and was buried in Old St. Paul's graveyard.

It is supposed that the very early hotel that stood at the corner of Hamilton Road and Stone Road was built by Mr. Vansittart. It was a most popular resort and well patronized.

Whiskey could be purchased for \$1 per gallon. It was on a log and lumber trail. It has been owned by three generations of the Ball family. Henry Ball bought it from Nick Cornish. It was called the Cornish Hotel. The Balls changed the name to Oxford Hotel. It had 20 rooms. J.R. Birchall who murdered Fred Benwell in 1890 occasionally stopped at this hotel. It ended as a temperance house in 1922. It was moved across the road in 1952 and used as a stable.

Eastwood had a very large sawmill, operated by a 35-horse power steam engine and could saw 15,000 feet per day.

The Anglican Church is at the east end of the village and the Methodist church and school are one mile south of the village.

Eastwood was the home of a noted character, the famous Cassie Chadwick. On the pretext that she was the illegitimate daughter of Andrew Carnegie, she secured thousands of dollars from various sources. A signature of Carnegie on a cheque for \$200,000 was a forgery. Finally the hoax exploded and it is said she died in an Ohio jail.

THE VILLAGE OF BANNER
This village is located at the west end of the township of

North Oxford in the County of Oxford. Its first name was Wesley, then Spearman's Corners (1851) after Joseph Spearman who owned the corner farm. It was called Banner for Post Office purposes, in 1893.

The Post Office department deemed 'Spearman's Corners' too long. Mail was delivered by train using the hook and hoop method of pick-up. James Clendinning was the mail man.

Mrs. Clark had a general store started by the "Patrons of Industry." There was a blacksmith shop but never a tavern in Banner.

An early Anglican Church stood on the east bank of the river on a knoll. Reverend H. Revell was minister in 1844. The cemetery was dedicated in 1845.

In 1839 there were the following settlers: John Connor, John Matthews, Jeremiah Minkler, and Joseph Spearman who owned the corner farm. Ten years later, these names appeared: Falconer, Chapman, Armstrong, Oliver, Hyde, Dundas, McFadden, Laughlin and Doty.

The first school was built on the south west corner of the Spearman farm, and was used as a place of worship. The next school in 1873, was a frame building which was moved to the present school site on the north west corner. Land for the frame school was bought from William Laughlin. The third school was erected in 1900. It was located a little to the rear of its predecessor, as the Department of Education desired more play grounds.

In 1854 there was a New Connexion church at the corners. This congregation went in with other groups to form the Methodist Church of Canada in 1883.

The Wesleyan Methodists were a congregation of worshippers as early as 1839 and their religious leaders were the saddlebag preachers of the time.

In 1851 this group was known as 'Spearman's Branch of the Oxford Circuit. The Methodists erected a church in 1856 and dedicated it on completion in 1857. (Continued Next Week)

INGERSOLL TIMES

May 24, 1978

VILLAGE OF EASTWOOD

This village is located on No. 2 Highway, (now county road nine), five miles east of Woodstock.

Settlement started here in 1833. It received its name from Mrs. East, the wealthy widowed sister of Admiral Henry Vansittart, who arrived in 1834. The admiral took up a large area of land on the north side of the road and built extensive buildings. The wife of Admiral Vansittart, died en route to Canada and Mrs. East came to supervise his servants and household and to maintain the dignity of the family.

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FORGOTTEN FOOTSTEPS.....

EAST OXFORD TOWNSHIP

by GRACE FIDDES

Bright although the scene
It shall be real at last if
man so wills.

The Pageant of Man
by Stanton A. Coblentz

"It shall be real at last if man
so wills." This line from poetry
indicates it was man's will.

The settlers of yesteryear had
a determination of will that was
a stranger to defeat.

The settlers of yesteryear had
to have a determination of will
that was a stranger to defeat.

The land was covered with forest
and in order to exist these
sturdy souls had to have a strong
back and a sharp axe.

Such was the case in East Oxford.

The first white settlers in the
township were the family of
Zachariah Burtch who came up
from New York State around 1798.
They built the first log house in
the township and their son settled
on the lot beside his father.

At the present time, neither
of these properties is in East
Oxford but are now part of the
city of Woodstock.

Governor Simcoe, in 1793,
gave a grant of land known as

the "Township of Oxford on the
Thames" which later was divided
into North, West and East Oxford
Townships. Forty settlers
occupied this land, some of whom
were United Empire Loyalists from
Connecticut.

CANFIELD FIRST SETTLER

Abraham Canfield was the first
settler in what is now East Oxford
and before his death he gave the
land for the present cemetery at
Oxford Centre.

The Burtch family were Baptists
and it was Archibald who started
a branch church of the Free Com-
munion Baptists at his home.

This was in 1825 and at the same
time he gave lands on which the
Woodstock Baptist College later
was built. He mortgaged his own
farm to help out when they got
into financial difficulties during
the building of the college.

Squire Teeple, an itinerant
minister, had a daughter who
married Archibald Burtch. All
of these people were in various
ways connected with the church.

FIRST DOCTOR

The first doctor to practise medicine
in Oxford County was Dr.
Levi Perry. This man, as well
as starting a practice in 1816 was
one of the first highway overseers
in East Oxford.

His territory was described as
being "from the west town line
to the Rising Sun". (The latter
is presumed to have been a tavern.)

The population of Oxford in
the year 1817 was 530 persons
with three quarters of them living
in East or West Oxford.

There were a couple of saw
mills, a grist mill, no schools,
churches or jails and no book
stores west of Dundas. In 1822
one school came into being at
Vandecar.

PAID IN WHEAT

There is in existence a document
which was signed on March
7, 1827 by a committee which
hired David Canfield as the first
teacher. The committee was
made up of inhabitants from Oxford
Township, District of London
and the Province of Upper Canada.

David Canfield's pay was set as
"two bushels of good merchant-
able wheat per scholar, delivered
at Samuel Canfield's barn" for
his three month term as teacher.

The committee also agreed
to board him and obtain "a con-
venient house and sufficient
quantity of firewood".

The teacher was bound "to
keep a Regular District Comm-
on School of reading, writing
and arithmetic according to the
best of his ability".

A Presbyterian church was built
at Muir in 1862 and the Meth-
odist church at Vandecar, now no
longer used, in 1856. Zion
Methodist at Oxford Centre was
built in 1861.

EASTWOOD IN 1861

The village of Eastwood in 1861
had a population of 150 persons.
There was a sawmill, blacksmith
shop, store, tavern -- and a
schoolteacher.

There also was a Church of Eng-
land with a Rev. Kellogg in charge
and a Justice of the Peace,
Michael Overholt.

There was a wagon and carriage
maker at Oxford Centre,
a postmaster and a hotel named
the Oxford House.

The school at Vandear now had
a thriving attendance of 45.

Municipal affairs had been ne-
glected up until this time but in
1849 on the first of January, at
the home of James Dorman, a
meeting was held for municipal
purposes.

In 1850, East Oxford was in-
corporated as a township.

The first purchase made by the
council was that of an official
township seal which is still in
use today.

The Hamilton Watch and Clock
Makers of Woodstock produced
the seal at a cost of two pounds.

Thus, while the French Rev-
olution of 1787 to 1799 raged and
atrocities were perpetrated, in
the forested wilderness of Oxford
men fought for man's will and
in the brotherhood of friendship
and learning, made a new land.

"I beheld how peace and plenty
stood
Shoulder to breast with friendship,
while content,

Had burgeoned in the soil of
brotherhood
And learning was the golden
coin men spent
With most abundant zeal."

Drilling Of Southern Well Probes Extent Of Gobles Oil

By BERT RUPPLE

The oil field at Gobles, just east of Woodstock, has now grown to be second largest producer in Southwestern Ontario and possibly eastern Canada, even though it is only two years old.

Comparing the Goble field with the veteran oil field at Oil Springs, Ontario, the first oil discovery in the world, in 1858, a circular field of approximate-

ly a mile and a half in diameter and the sister field of Petrolia with about 50 square miles of area, the Gobles field has now taken the spotlight on the eastern Canadian oil scene.

The area of the Gobles field is approximately 22 square miles, with a field of four miles wide by six miles long.

Peter Tostik of the Kerrwood Exploration company reveals that the field is a very delicate type of oil and gas producer,

in that it must be developed in a careful process of scientific engineering. This is done by the fracturing engineers of the Haliburton company.

Said Mr. Tostik, "The field is quite likely a very large field because of the low rock pressure." He went on to explain, "That is at a depth of 2900 feet the pressure should be 900 to a 1000 pounds of rock pressure, instead of only the 575 to 600 pounds that this field shows."

He added, "We should not feel alarmed though, because a field in Texas has been producing oil for 20 years from the same 2900 foot depth with a rock pressure lower by at least 100 pounds." **COULD EXPAND**

The field may be expanded to about 15 miles wide this year with the drilling plans of Imperial Oil, which will drill a hole seven miles directly south of the Melrose motel. If oil is struck, it would mean that the field could still be wider, but should salt water be encountered then they will have hit the edge of the field.

On the other hand should Imperial strike gas, it would mean a new field has been found. In any case it will be an important hole in the development of the Gobles field, in that they are stepping out of the known field to exploring and assisting

others to properly define the present fields boundary.

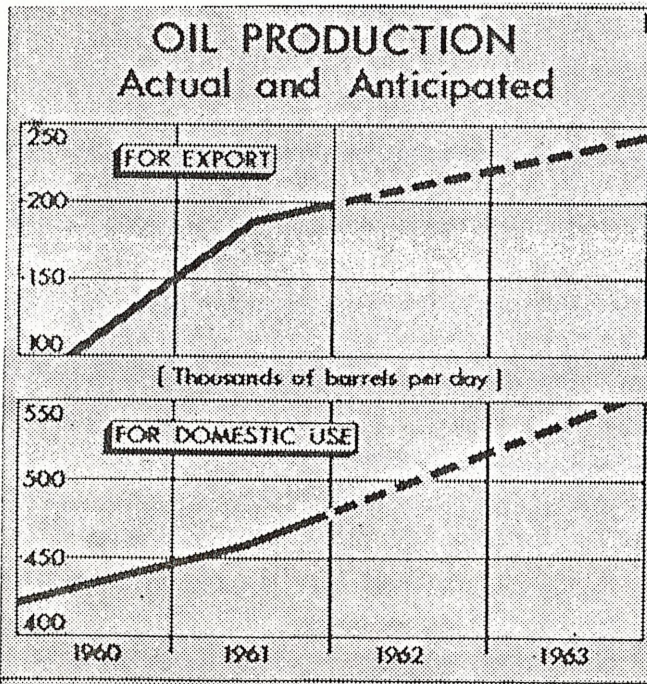
Sumac-Kerrwood and Imperial Oil are planning to drill a joint well on lot 21, concession one of Blenheim, on track F shortly after the new year, while swabbing operations are underway at the site of Sumac-Kerrwood No. 1, and the well is expected to be in production within the next couple of days.

On Lot 17 of the second concession of Burford township, the McMasters are presently drilling a hole and hope for a blow-in shortly.

McMasters are now drilling well No. 10, while No. 9, is expected to be drilled the first of the year under McMaster-Mercury-Chipman.

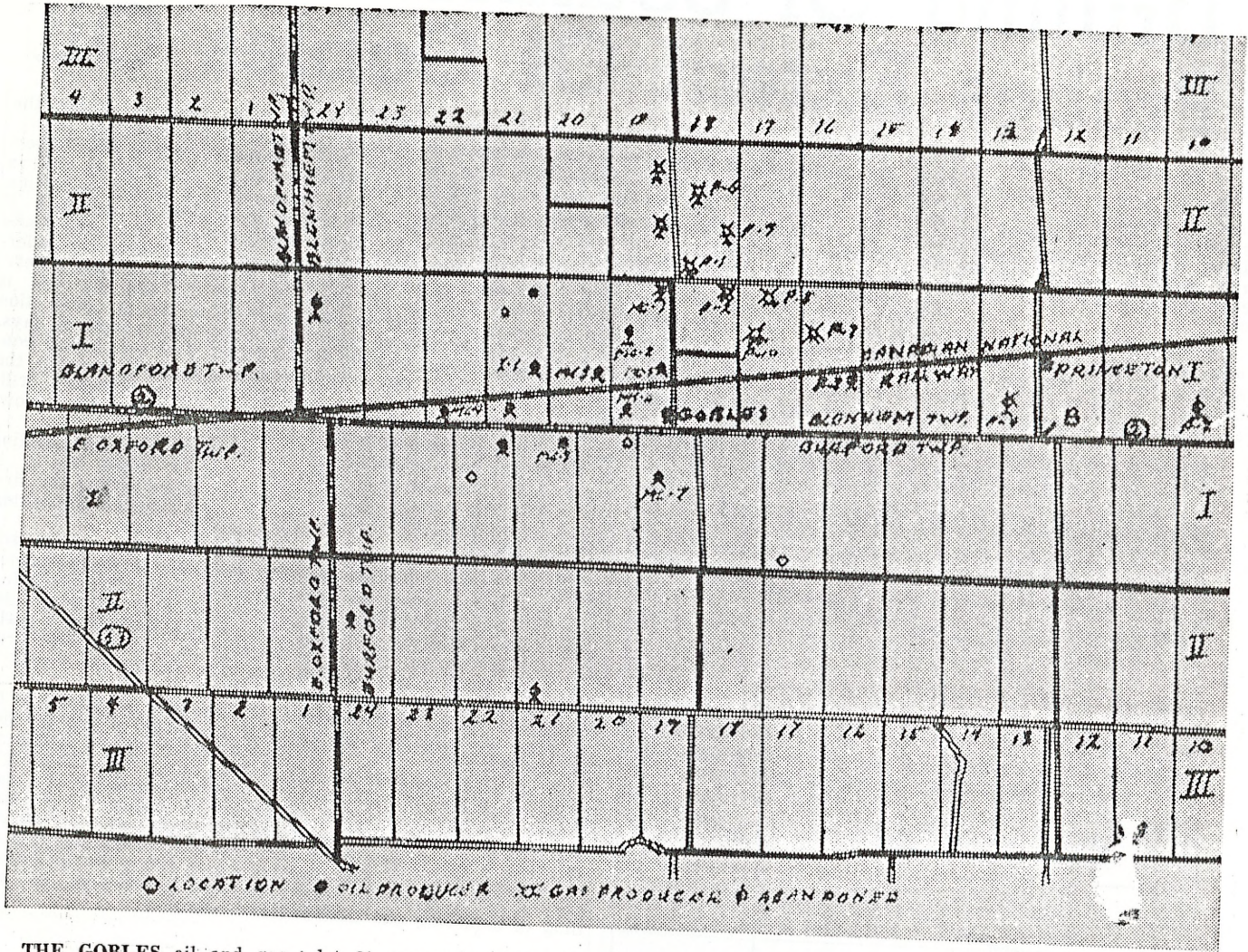
Kerrwoods' plans are to drill six wells in the south-easterly-direction from Gobles before the end of 1962, while it is felt that the field travels in a north-westerly to south-easterly direction with Gobles the centre of the field.

A final note of interest in the field at Gobles is that the field is estimated to be a billion and a half years old. This figure is a reliable estimate as a professor of geology can come within a year and a half in a billion years with scientific calculations today in determining the age of mineral and rock formations.



URGED on by the federal government's oil policy calling for production of 800,000 barrels of oil a day by 1963, the Canadian oil industry is on target with a boost of 100,000 barrels daily to 640,000 in 1961. Graphs, based on year-

ly and half-yearly totals only, show that most of the 17-percent increase in 1961 went for export. However, the industry expects a levelling off in exports and a sharper climb in domestic oil consumption in 1962 and 1963. (CP Newsmap).



THE GOBLES oil and gas field map, drawn to the scale of $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch to the mile shows the location of sites for future oil drilling operations. The open dot on

lot 21 concession one, Blenheim township will be the site of the Imperial, Sumac-Kerwood No. 1, while Imperial Oil will drill a well on lot 22,

concession one, Burford township and Blenheim township will be the site of the Imperial, Sumac-Kerwood No. 1, while Imperial Oil will drill a well on lot 22,

that Cambrian tests have been made; that is to say that drilling operations were extended into the granite or marble of the pre-Cambrian layer.

SENTINEL REVIEW

January 6, 1962

East Oxford Township Straddles Stage Road, An Indian Trail Which Brought Immigrants

By ART WILLIAMS

In 1763 when Canada was formally ceded to England there were no permanent settlements west of the Ottawa River. Settlement began in 1783 and then moved westward along the St. Lawrence and around Niagara, as the United Empire Loyalists moved into Canada after the American War of Independence. In 1791 the Constitutional Act divided Canada into Upper and Lower Canada and Col. John Graves Simcoe became first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada in 1792.

One of Simcoe's first acts towards getting the vast wilderness settled was to induce settlers from the United States to settle here. He offered a township of land to anyone who would provide 40 settlers and families for the township as permanent settlers. One of the first men to accept this offer was Thomas Ingersoll of Great Barrington, Mass. U.S.A. and he was granted 64,000 acres which now make up East, West, and North Oxford townships. In his choice of land he was assisted by an old friend, Joseph Brant, chief of the Six Nations who undoubtedly led Ingersoll down the trail that is known today as the Stage road of East Oxford.

After Ingersoll, many other notables walked or rode down this Indian trail including Simcoe himself when he walked from Brant's Ford to Sandwich. When mail was carried from York to Sandwich, it went along this route. With this in mind a person can understand why it still follows the path of least resistance around hills and skirting swamps. Few changes have taken place in the general layout of this road.

CANFIELD'S

The first settlers in what is now East Oxford and whose farm was where Oxford Centre now is when Samuel and Lucy Canfield who were United Empire Loyalists from Connecticut and their two sons Abraham and Samuel, Jr. They were members of the original 40 of the Ingersoll party. He donated land for a cemetery and he and his wife are buried in the Pioneer Cemetery of Oxford Centre. Others who made up the ori-

ginal 40 settlers in Ingersoll's party were Elisha Hoskins, David Thompson, Leander Barnes, Montgomery Austin, James Piper, Nodias Sawyer, Samuel Ball, Ebenezer Cook, Ichabod Hall, Lucius Morgan, Benjamin Lummis, Thomas Ingersoll, Charles Whiting, John Sherman, John Clark, Seth Putnam, Samuel Canfield, Josiah Crossman, Ebenezer Whiting, Samuel Mack, Justice Allan, Elijah Ots, David Curtis, Elijah Hoskins, Luther Hoskins, Thomas Dexter, Joseph Sage, Samuel Bendeck, Robert Spellman, Elgin Scott, Reuben Thrall, Daniel Ingersoll, James Hopkins, Thomas Lee, David Seley, David Sabine, Joseph Forrester, Reuben Forrester, John Gordon, Medad Parson, William Appleby, Hiram Burtch, William Mills, William Allison and Allan Sage.

FIRST SURVEY

The first surveying in the township was done by Augustus Jones, Deputy Surveyor of Upper Canada, under direction of John Graves Simcoe, first Governor of Upper Canada in the year 1793. At that time the Old Stage Road was an Indian trail winding through the bush from Brantford to the Forks of the Thames River, now London. Eighteen years later the Statutes for 1811 of the 5th Parliament of Upper Canada, in the 51st year of George III, allotted certain sums of money to be spent for that year on roads as follows:

"From Burford to Samuel Kiney's place on Kinney Creek, 20 pounds, from Samuel Kineys to Pine Wind Falls (Cathcart) 20 pounds, from Pine Wind Falls to the Cooley place on the Stage Road, 30 pounds, from Cooley's to the east town line of Oxford, 35 pounds, from thence to Captain Canfield's 85 pounds, from thence to Haskins place, 30 pounds and to the new dwelling at Reynolds Mills, 40 pounds, from thence to Archibald McMillans, London, 50 pounds and

the west side of the river to La-Tranche, (London) to the wilderness, 90 pounds."

In later years over a mile of the Old Stage road running through lots 1, 2 and 3 of East Oxford was closed and a new road constructed further north on the fifth line of the township. It took three years and four by-laws to accomplish this change, which was bitterly opposed by some of the persons affected.

GUILD ROAD

Also in the early days there was a road running from the Old Stage road south between lots 8 and 9 to the 6th concession, known as the Guild road, this was closed in 1880. Another road, about which little is now known, is shown on early maps as a "given" road, it ran in an almost direct line from Eastwood to Vandecar.

Settlement along this trail was not too speedy as after Simcoe was removed from office the future looked black for these worthy men who introduced civilization along the Thames River.

In 1798 Blenheim, Blandford and Oxford on the Thames along with Burford, Norwich and Dereham became known as Oxford County. The township of Oxford on the Thames remained until 1822 when the section now known as North Oxford withdrew and in 1842 East and West Oxford became separate townships.

MARLBOROUGH IMMIGRANT

By this time Woodstock had come into existence and Vansittart had built a mill at Eastwood along with his massive estate. The followers of the Duke of Marlborough who were given grants of land in East Oxford started a second wave of immigrants the effect of this large estate of Vansittart was easily recognized and is still visible today in the large homes that dot the landscape.

Sentinel Review

Mar 31 '62

It was not unusual for a settler to start off in a small two room cabin and as soon as he was able he would built a monstrous house and have it finished inside with the very best of lumber and a fireplace in almost every room. It is said that these English aristocrats did a great deal of entertaining. One had to keep up with the Joneses if they wanted to move in this select circle.

In 1830 a second wave of American immigrants passed down this stage road when many Americans on their way to the American west took a short cut through Canada rather than the long trip around the lakes.

LOST PAYROLL

About this road many tales are told and some can be repeated while others cause considerable doubt in the minds of present day Canadians. One story often told is about a teamster in the employ of the army in 1812 who lost a part of a payroll and who, when he was wounded later confided in a friend that he had hid this money near Kenny Creek. This has never been found and creates an urge among the younger generation to look for this buried treasure. There was found two pieces of slate tied together with copper wire near Kenny Creek with instructions carved on them which would lead to a buried treasure but the family who possess this slate

There are also stories of highway robberies and murders that would make modern television programs seem rather tame.

VANDECAAR

Seymour Sage had the honor of having the first sub-division in East Oxford which he called Sagerville. The streets were named after members of his family and it was in the vicinity of what became Vandecaar which is 1862 contained a store, a grist and saw mill, a blacksmith and a shoe shop. It also contained a Wesleyan Methodist Church erected of brick in 1856 at a cost of \$3,500 and a school with an average attendance of 45 pupils.

In 1822 East Oxford had one school and this is presumed to have been at Vandecaar. An early account reads as follows: "This article witnesseth that the undersigned inhabitants of Oxford Township, District of London, Province of Upper Canada, in school meeting assembled, have appointed David Canfield to teach a District Common School in the aforesaid Township, and that they shall pay him for his services for the term of three months at the rate of two bushels of good

merchantable wheat per scholar, delivered at Samuel Canfield's barn the first day of January next, and they further agree to board him the said term of three months and procure a convenient house and a sufficient quantity of fire wood, etc. And the said David Canfield do the covenant and agree to keep a regular District Common School of reading, writing and arithmetic according to the best of his ability".

This seventh day of March, 1827. Signed by Henry Canfield, David Curtis, Isaac Curtis and Henry Parken.

Vandecaar post office was established in 1836 and Thomas H. Arnell was the first postmaster followed by W. J. Davis, Thomas Skerred, Johnas Tansley, Thomas Mighton, A. R. Burrows, Thomas Kneale, Thomas Knaggs and Mrs. Frances Danby. This office was closed in 1913 and inauguration of the rural mail delivery and the area is now served from the Woodstock office.

TOWN HALL

Oxford Centre was selected as the site for the East Oxford Town Hall in 1850 when the first council met at the home of Daniel Smith on January 21st. The cost of this hall was raised by levying a tax of 225 pounds. The first meeting was held in the new hall on December 30, 1850. The present hall was built in 1910 and later declared a memorial to the men who served in the war of 1914-18. The first purchase made by this council was the official township seal which was purchased from the Hamilton Watch and Clockmakers of Woodstock, at a cost of two pounds.

The first tax roll was 335 pounds, six shillings and seven pence or approximately sixteen hundred and seventy-five dollars. Another source of revenue was the clergy reserve fund, as much as 500 pounds were received from this source. Taverns which were plentiful paid a total license fee of 28 pounds, six shillings and three pence and Wild Land tax brought in 12 pounds.

Members of the first council were James Scarff, William Burgess, William Peers and Mr.

Leake. William Burgess was a reeve. Jonathan Tripp was the clerk treasurer, John Hall assessor, James McCallum, tax collector with George Curray and William Lemon, the auditors.

ROADS

The first system of road building and maintenance was carried out by Overseers of Highways who were appointed yearly by the council for each concession or townline. Each one had under his jurisdiction about two miles of road. As an example of one beat, it was described as being from the West quarter town line on the third concession (Blows School) easterly to the large swamp and another on the Stage road was from William Meeks east corner to Daly's west corner. In the same year Eliphalet Wood's division was from the Oxford Centre corner to William Meek's west corner.

In 1861 Oxford Centre had one store and one hotel owned by H. C. Griswold. The hotel was named the "Oxford House". Alexander Robb was the school teacher, William Crawford was the blacksmith, William Moore was a carriage and wagon maker, and William Barbutt, the postmaster. James T. Chapman preceded William Barbutt as postmaster when the office was opened in 1853 and Mr. Chapman was followed by Nelson Schooley, Thomas E. Chambers, William Hallam, J. F. Elliott, Henry Greenley, D. C. Armstrong, Mrs. Jessie Armstrong, Edward Wilson, Stuart Nancekivell, Raymond Wilson and Mrs. Marjorie Butterwick.

When the post office was opened it received service Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between Woodstock and Norwich and was temporarily closed between 1901 and 1903. This office is now served daily from Woodstock.

The loyalty of the British crown by the United Empire Loyalists has been inherited by the present residents of East Oxford and many rallied to the colours in both wars of 1914-18 and of 1939-45 when several gave their lives and are remembered in the memorials at the township hall.

Samuel Platt Picked Site For Mill At Plattsville

When Samuel Platt first settled on the spot now occupied by Plattsville, he probably had no idea that one day flour from his mill would win a world's prize in faraway Paris, France.

Platt came to Blenheim in 1851 and when he arrived on the attractive spot by the Nith River, then called Smith Creek, he decided at once that here was an ideal location for a grist-mill.

He built the first mill in this part of the township and the choice of location was so good that there has been a mill at the same place continuously ever since.

The village of Plattsville was surveyed by James Black and within ten years had become one of the most progressive communities in Oxford. This enterprise was continued, even though the Grand Trunk Railroad had bypassed Plattsville and ran to the south of the village.

A woollen mill was added to community business, and a cabinet factory manufactured chairs and palls. A foundry did a good trade in agricultural implements.

In 1858 a second flour and grist mill was opened, along

with a cooper shop which kept both mills supplied with barrels.

By 1873 a high point in the Platt fortunes was reached when flour from the mills won first prize at the World's Fair in Paris.

Samuel Platt had believed in diversification in earlier years. When one of the first schools in Plattsville was planned, he won the building contract for \$590. The year was 1857 and enrollment at the school was to be 126.

The need for family labor was so strong on most homesteads, however, that daily attendance rarely went above 75. The seeds of earnest labor were sown early in those days and it continued to win distinction for the people of Plattsville.

By ART WILLIAMS

The first acquisition of lands in this province from the Indians, appears to have taken place on the third of April 1764. The Seneca Nation, who held the lands along the east side of the River Niagara, and also claimed jurisdiction upon a strip two miles in width lying along the west side, from the mouth of the river to the great cataract, a distance of some 14 miles, through their principal chiefs assembled at Johnson Hall, concluded an agreement with the superintendent of Indian Affairs, to cede to His Majesty, and his successors forever, all their right and title to said lands. The Missasaugas, however, claimed ownership over all lands lying on the west side, and it was found necessary in justice to this title, to arrange a further treaty which confirmed His Majesty's dominion.

On the 23rd of March 1784, Sir John Johnson was directed to purchase from the Missasaugas the whole territory lying between Lakes Huron and Ontario. On May 22 a meeting of the Missasaugas and the chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations and Delawares was held at Niagara, when Chief Pokquan, a Missasauga, informed the assembly that his nation did not own all the land between the Tree Lakes, as that part lying south of the River La Trench (Thames) and west of Cat Fish Creek, which included all that territory within what is now the township of Sandwich on the west and Yarmouth on the east, belonged to the Wester tribes, the remainder however, which consisted of some 2,842,480 acres, the Missasaugas were willing to dispose of, and for the sum of eleven hundred and eighty pounds, seven shillings, and four pence, they surrendered all their right and title to this vast tract of country.

DEMAND FOR LAND

By the year 1790 more lands were wanted for prospective settlers and on the 19th day of May of that year, the aforesaid tract, about two million acres of land, bounded on the South by Lake Erie, on the West by the Detroit River, on the North by River La Trench, and on the east by Cat Fish Creek, was ceded to the Crown by the Ottawas, Chippewas, Pottawatomies and Hurons, for a consideration of 1,200 pounds.

In the year 1818 the Missasaugas of the River Credit and of Rice and Mud Lakes, surrendered some 2,600,000 acres for annuities of 522 pounds to the former and 740 pounds to the latter. This was followed by another surrender of 2,748 acres in 1819 by the Missasugas of Alinwick, for which were to receive an annuity of 642 pounds.

In 1818, 1820, and 1821 Chippewas of Lakes Huron and St. Clair, Chancel Ecarte and River Thames, signed away 2,800,000 acres of their hunting grounds, for annuities of 1,200, 1,100 and 150 pounds respectively.

BLenheim

The township of Blenheim is one of the three largest townships in Oxford and when it was completely surveyed it contained some 66,400 acres, being 200 more than any other township in the county. Although this township was the first settled, it did not progress as fast as some of the others but as the township opened it soon came to the front and obtained a reputation for excellent farms and bumper crops. By the census of 1852 it produced 50,340 bushels of wheat, an average of 21 3/4 bushel per acre. In 1830 it had 498 beef cattle, by 1852, there were 1,158, in 1830 it had 245 milch cows and in 1852 there were 1,585 milch cows.

The township of Blenheim formed part of the west riding of the county of York in the first territorial division in 1792 and was described as follows:

22 are going to British Columbia, 11 of these being destined for Vancouver schools. Of the others, 17 are going to Ontario schools, seven of them to Toronto. Six are going to Saskatchewan, three to Alberta and one each to Nova Scotia and Manitoba.

For the first time a teacher from Jersey, one of the Channel Islands, is included in the exchange arrangements. She is Miss H. Eddy, who is going to teach in North York Township in exchange with G. J. Szabo.

KEEN INTEREST

I talked to many of these teachers at the reception at the Drew residence, and found them all keenly interested in the experiences which lie ahead of them as teachers in Canadian schools.

A lean, athletic-looking Scot from Kirkcaldy, Fife, is bound for Woodstock, Ontario. He is Ian A. Reekie, who is exchanging with G. A. Parsons, of the teaching staff of the senior school in Woodstock. I was able to assure him that he would find quite a substantial Scottish community in which to make friends in and around Woodstock.

"Blenheim lies to the northward of Dundas Street opposite Burford" and in 1798 by Act 38, George III, Chapter Five, the township became part of Oxford when it was first formed. The first part of the township was surveyed by Augustus Jones in 1793, a second part by Mr. Riddell in 1795 and a third part by A. Stigman in 1798.

Among the first to receive land up to 1800 were Rev. Thomas Raddish, John Powell, A. C. Willmot, Bell McLean, and Henry McLean. The first lot sold by the Government was lot 10, concession 14 to William Wardue for 15 shillings per acre on August 28, 1833. The first white child born here was in 1801, a female child and the first male was born in 1804. Although Horner built the first sawmill in the township in 1797, by 1857 there were only five sawmills in operation in the township and were capable of sawing one million, eight hundred thousand feet of lumber per annum and were valued at

PLATTSVILLE

About the year 1851, Samuel Platt arrived on the spot now occupied by Plattsville and one look at the Nith River, then called Smith Creek, told him that it was an ideal spot for a gristmill and shortly after arriving here he built the first gristmill in this part of the township. So good was his choice of a location that there has continually been a mill at this spot. The original mill contained four run of stone. The town site was surveyed by James Black and ten years after it was surveyed it was one of the most progressive villages in Oxford especially when you consider that the railroad had passed it by and the nearest station was four miles away. Ed Gatzka drove the stage which made two trips a day to the train with mail and passengers.

The village contained a steam woollen mill which was established on Albert Street and operated by J. Crombie and Company, and hired about 50 hands steadily to manufacture tweeds and stocking yarn. It contained 16 looms, 5 spinning jacks, 1,200 spindles and all the other requirements for a complete mill. All this was propelled by a 60-horse power engine. In support of this woollen mill there was a steam cabinet factory, three carriage and wagon factories and a stove factory. The cabinet factory also manufactured chairs and pails employing about 15 hands. There was also a large foundry owned by A. McArthur and Company who did a large trade in manufacturing mowing and reaping machines and all kinds of agricultural implements.

In 1858 a second flour and grist mill was opened along with a cooper shop which kept both mills supplied with barrels and in 1873 flour from these mills won first prize at the World's Fair in Paris, France.

TELEPHONE

In 1886, Plattsville was connected with New Hamburg by telephone and became one of the first municipalities of Oxford to be connected onto the long distance lines of the Bell Telephone Co which at that time was the eighth wonder of the world. The first telephone was located at Veitch and Neals Drug Store, a second one was located at Snider and Stickers. The old Blake telephone that was installed in Plattsville consisted of three boxes mounted on a back board. The topmost box contained a magneto generator, the middle box had a hole in it for the mouthpiece and the bottom box contained the battery for the "talking current". A bell shaped receiver dangled on the left at the top of the box and a crank protruded on the right.

In the nineties, C. A. Rutherford became local manager and the long distance switch was moved to his combination residence and grocery store. There were six customers at that time and the switchboard was installed in a bedroom at his resi-

Besides the two original the Baird Furniture Factory, McKie Buggy Works, Dr. J. L. Brown and Dr. A. I. Wilson made up the select group. A uniform rate was charged for a five minute conversation according to the distance. Timid folk would dictate their messages to someone brave enough to use this new fangled piece of equipment.

In 1902 Plattsville applied for local telephones to connect them up not only with their neighbors but to connect business establishments with the railroad at Bright. In 1903 a switchboard was installed in the Bank of Commerce building and the village exchange became a reality with J. K. Curry who was also postmaster and CNR freight agent, as local manager. Mr. Curry retired from this position in 1942 at the age of 82 after 39 years of service. In 1911 24-hour service was inaugurated, and Plattsville's 100th telephone was installed. On October 16, 1960 dial system replaced all this and brought about the retirement of Miss Jessie McMeekin and Mrs. Love, the former with 31 years and the latter with 24 years service.

In 1888 a skating rink was built and in 1907 the local hockey team won the OWHA championship. The players on the team were E. Sipes, Doug. Brown, H. Shosenberg, Andy Grieves, Perc. McKie, Ab. Greives, Frank Foster, Jack Robson and Ed Siebert. The rink was destroyed by fire Dec. 30, 1947, but within a year a new one was built to replace it.

POLICE VILLAGE

In 1908, Plattsville became a police village having had a post office since 1855 when Samuel Platt was named postmaster and held his position until 4th April 1872 and John Smart became postmaster until December 1887 and John Kiseman Currey served from January 1888 until April 8, 1942 and James Edward Ferguson from 1942 until April 20, 1959. Cameron Gillis Shantz, the present postmaster was appointed on May 17, 1960 and when he moves into the new post office he will be the first postmaster to operate a post office in Plattsville in a government owned building.

Little is known of the schools in Plattsville except that Samuel Platt received the contract to build one in 1857 for \$590. This school had an average attendance of 75 students but the enrolment numbered 126. Levi Master was the teacher. During the term that W. Veitch served as secretary for the school he sent two bottles of water from the school well to Toronto for analysis and received a very favorable report. It said that the water was fit for drinking but that two bushel of lime should be put in the well and all the water pumped out. This would clean the well of any impurities that might exist.

The religious requirements of the people were looked after by the Wesleyan Methodist who in 1851 formed part of the Dumfries Circuit in the Blenheim Mission with Rev. J. Shepley in charge and the first church was erected in 1853 at a cost of \$800 and seating capacity for 200. The German Lutherans also had a church in Plattsville, it was erected in 1860. The Anglicans met in the school house in 1862 with Rev. Clotworthy officiating.

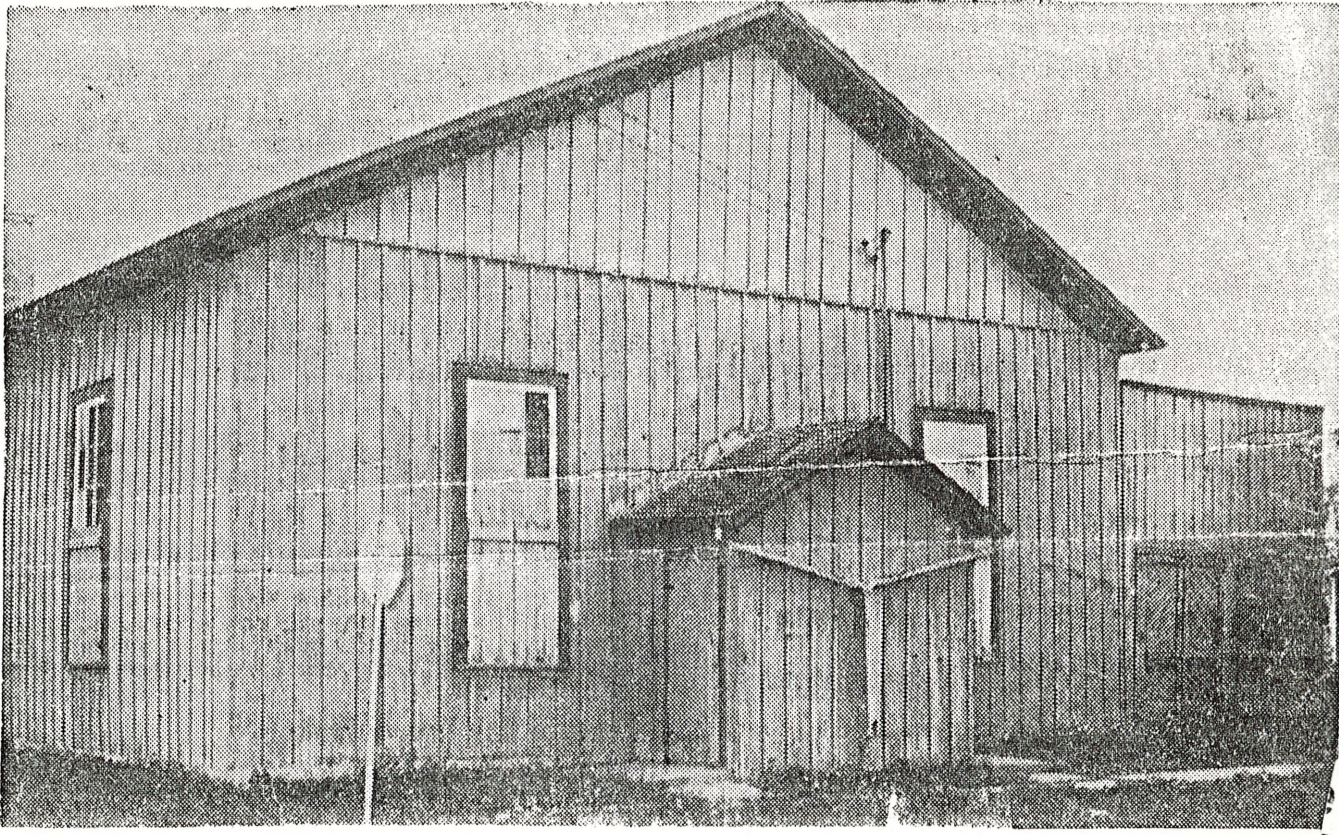
NEWSPAPER

Plattsville also boasted of a newspaper known as The Echo which was first published in

1887 by Mr. Chester and continued until 1925 when Mr. Graham published the last edition.

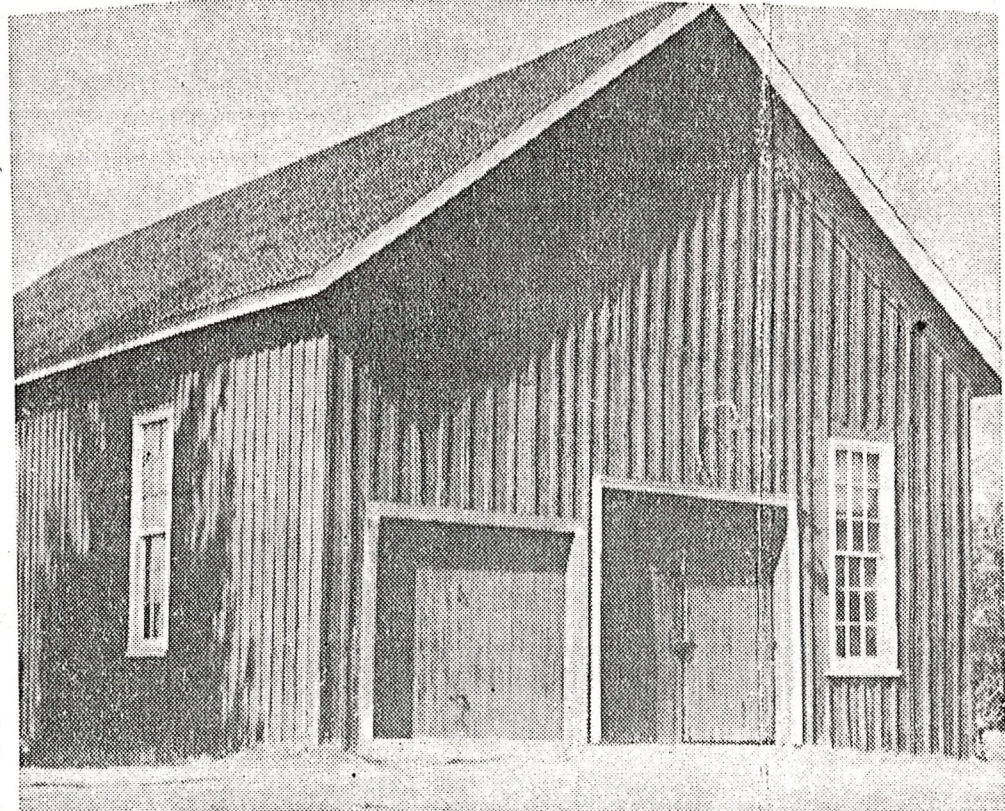
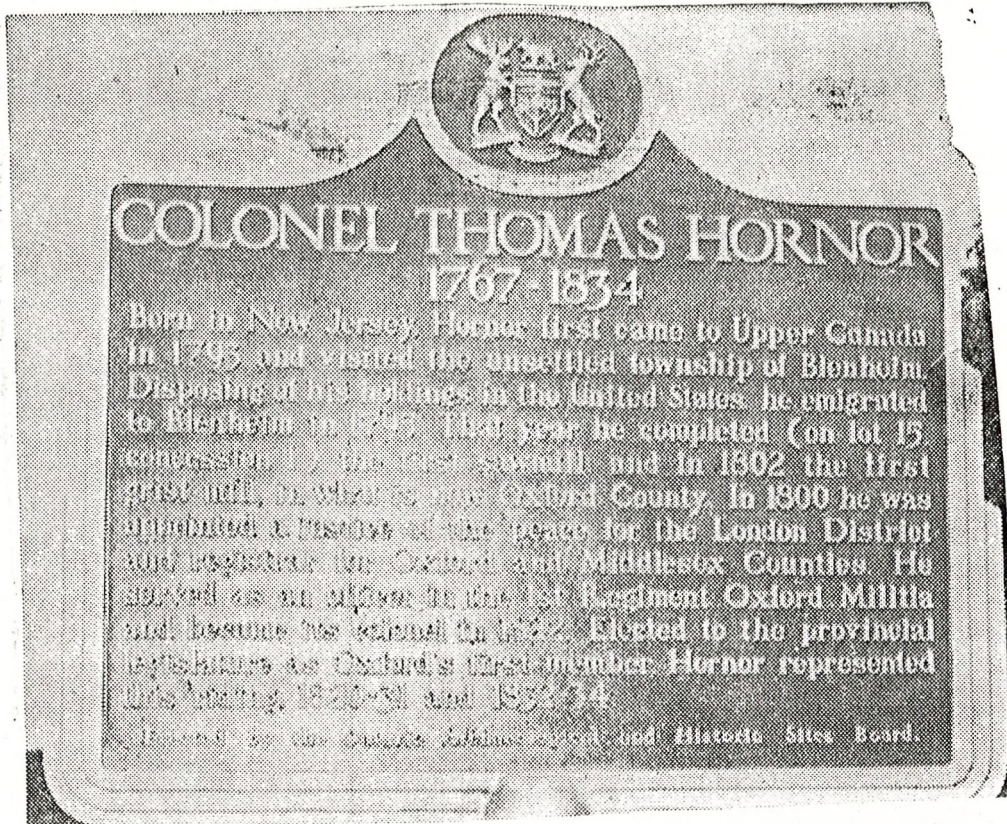
In 1905 a group of business men were convinced that oil lay beneath the village and after pooling \$500, they hired an oil driller who drilled to a level of 1,500 feet and struck a sulphur spring and a second hole proved the same and all that A. Echel, J. Baird, R. McKie, John Hall and Dr. Brown got for their efforts was a flowing sulphur well.

Plattsville has not suffered the fate of many other communities even though the railway did pass it by and through the determination of its citizens to make a thriving community out of this hamlet, they were able to get the Canada Sandpaper Company to locate here and today it is the heartbeat of Plattsville.



old township hall served the community for many years the local meeting place. (S_c photos)

SENTINEL REVIEW
May 26, 1962



THE OLDEST building in Princeton is shown in **TOP LEFT** photo. Built after the fire of 1866, it was located in the vicinity of the present drug store in the village. About 60 years ago it was purchased by a Mr. Swartz, for use as an implement shed, and moved to its present

location. **TOP RIGHT:** Unveiled in 1961, this plaque is located at the entrance to the Princeton cemetery, and commemorates the work in Blenheim Township by Col. Thomas Hornor. **LOWER:** This is the tombstone that marks the grave of Frederick Cornwall Benwell who was sent to Canada by his parents, and

was later found murdered in Blenheim swamp. The marker is of limestone, and the inscription was put on by fusing molten lead into holes bored into the stone, and mounting gold letters in the metal. The gold has completely disappeared, but the wording can still be read. (Staff Photos)

OXFORD BECAME COUNTY IN 1798

SENTINEL REVIEW

April 7, 1962

Princeton Among Area's Oldest

PRINCETON, in Oxford County, has the distinction of being older than most of the towns and cities of Western Ontario. In days when age and veneration are proudly celebrated, and particularly since The Free Press is marking its 100th anniversary this year, Princeton beams with a dignified satisfaction when it thinks of the year 1795. It was then that the foundations of the Village of Princeton were laid.

There was one family more instrumental than any other in the settling of the village. The name was Horner.

The Horners came to the United States, or rather the British colonies which later were to become independent, on the ship "Providence" in 1683. They settled in New Jersey. In Yorkshire, these people, generally of some means, had suffered in prison for their belief in the doctrines of George Fox, but in America they prospered and multiplied.

Donated Land

It was the Horner family that donated the land upon which Princeton College was built, and they were active in its founding.

In 1795, four years after the Constitutional Act was signed and Upper Canada came into being, Thomas Horner erected a saw mill at Horner's Creek,

just west of the present Village of Princeton.

Thomas had come to Canada in 1793 with his cousin at the request of Governor Simcoe. The governor had met the cousin's father, Thomas Watson, in the Revolutionary War, and wished to reward him for services rendered. Simcoe also had in mind the problem of populating the vast area which had come under his jurisdiction, and the United States appeared to him to be a good recruiting ground for good Loyalist stock.

The governor, promised Watson a whole township if he would settle it with his friends and relatives. Although the American did not wish to endure the hardships of pioneer life himself, he sent his son and nephew to take possession of the land. His son did not remain, but Thomas Horner did.

Invested Fortune

Horner invested his entire fortune in the venture. He bought material for the mill in Albany and brought it by boat to Burlington Bay, near the site of Sir Alan McNab's castle. It was then transported to Blenheim Township by oxen, and he had the equipment in operation by 1797.

Having exhausted his savings in the venture, Horner was now ready to claim his township. Un-

fortunately, however, Simcoe had been recalled. The agreement had apparently been a gentleman's one because the new governor refused to acknowledge the claim. It was the source of considerable bitterness, but Horner stayed on and became Oxford's first member in Parliament when the county qualified in 1820.

The first plank of Horner's mill was sawed in 1797, and a grist mill was immediately erected. It was burned, however, in 1809. This was the first settlement in Oxford county, then known as "Western District". The district ran from Detroit, where the courthouse was built, easterly to the meridian running through Long Point and comprehending all the lands northwesterly of these boundaries not already included in the bounds of the Hudson Bay Company or the territory of the United States. To the east, the nearest settlement was Brantford, and to the west there was what is now known as Chatham.

LONDON FREE PRESS

June 11, 1949



Shown above is the first business place of Princeton, built a century ago by William Davis, a Welshman, who settled the site later to become a shipping centre. The picture below shows the old blacksmith shop as it is today. After having served the days of the pioneer, the building was converted into a grocery and hardware store and still remains in the Davis family.



LONDON FREE PRESS

June 11, 1949

Ratho

By ART WILLIAMS

After the union of Upper and Lower Canada, the first parliament was from the 1st of July, 1841 until the 9th of December, 1843. The election for the county was held in Woodstock (the first to be held here) and was held on March 15, 1841. There were two candidates seeking election, Francis Hinks, who was the editor of the Examiner of Toronto, and Peter Carroll of West Oxford. Hinks was elected with a majority of 31 votes. Hinks was appointed Inspector General (this would be Finance Minister today) but had to vacate his seat but he re-contested it against John Armstrong of Zorra on July 14, 1842 and was elected with a majority of 218 votes. Lord Metcalfe dissolved this parliament in 1844 but it did pass a new election law which required a polling booth in each township and simplified the election oath.

The second election took place in October, 1844 with Parliament convening on December 20, 1844, and dissolved on July 28, 1847. Nominations took place at Woodstock on Friday, October 8 and the polls were open in the townships the following Wednesday and Thursday. Those seeking election were Francis Hinks and Robert Riddle. Hinks received 722 and Riddle 742 and Riddle was elected much to the annoyance of Hinks who went to Montreal and established a new paper — The Pilot — and carried on his battle from there.

1847 ELECTION

In the next election of 1847, he again was a candidate but being out of the country on nomination day, although his papers were properly filed with Shennstone, the county clerk Mr. J. Vansittart, the returning officer disqualified him even though he had a majority of 346 votes over Mr. Peter Carroll of Hamilton. The election took place on December 30 and January 1st, 1848 but Mr. Carroll was unseated by a majority in the house. Mr. Hinks again accepted the office of Inspector-General and therefore had to seek re-election but was unopposed at nominations. In this parliament further changes were made with the sheriff and township clerk being ex-officio returning officers for their respective townships and the polls were to be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. for two days.

In the election of Aug. 1851 Hinks was opposed by John G. Vansittart and in the election Hinks won with a majority of 79 votes.

PRIME MINISTER

In 1851 Hinks was appointed Prime Minister by the Governor General and in 1852 he visited England in the interests of the Grand Trunk Railroad. His proposition to the Canadian parliament to spend \$16,000,000 in furtherance of this project was considered by many beyond the financial powers of this country.

Incidentally he was a Liberal and also president of the Federated Life Insurance Company.

Previous to the next general election which took place in 1854, the county was divided for electoral purposes into a north and south riding. In the south riding there were three candidates, Hinks, Carroll and Miller. Hinks was elected with a majority of 480 votes over Carroll who received nine votes. In the north riding D. Matheson, the warden of the county was unopposed being the third person to be so honored, Horner and Hinks being the other two. This parliament sat until 1857.

In the election of 1857, there were eight candidates in the south riding being Dr. Cook, Bodwell, Gourlay, Connor, Masson, VanNorman, Ball and Closter. The fight was between Connor and Ball with Connor being elected by one vote. I wonder if they had recounts in those days? In the north riding D. Matheson was opposed by D. G. Miller and George Brown, owner of the Toronto Globe. Brown was elected by a large majority but he was also elected for a riding in Toronto and he accepted the Toronto seat calling for another election in this riding. Hon. J. C. Morrison and William McDougall were the candidates with McDougall being elected by a majority of 207 votes.

In the first territorial division of Upper Canada on July 16, 1793 the territory which afterwards formed the township of Blandford formed part of the west riding of York and was described by the first surveyor-general as the most westerly in the west riding of York lying north of Dundas St. opposite to Cambridge. In 1808 it was attached to Oxford.

TOWNSHIP SURVEYED

The township was surveyed first by Augustus Jones in 1793, another section by Mr. Law in 1797 with further surveys being made by Andrew Miller in 1824, Mahlon Burwell in 1832 and Peter Carroll in 1834. The first lots granted were on November 15, 1832 when Graham Nelles was granted land on the 1st, 2nd, 4th and 19th concessions. The first lot sold by the government was the east half of lot 25, concession 1 on January 19, 1832 to Thomas Rowland for 12s, 6d per acre.

In 1820 20,000 acres of land were appropriated for the endowment of a college. The township was attached to East Oxford until 1836 in which year the first township meeting was held with Rev. Adam Vansittart acting as the chairman of the meeting. W. H. Langdon was appointed assessor, L. T. Thorne, tax collector and William Lapierre the township clerk. About 730 acres of the township were included in the town of Woodstock and in 1861 Woodstock became detached from the township. On the formation of

township and city councils in 1850 John Barwick was elected the first reeve with John Gillespie, G. W. Whitehead, George Alexander, John M. F. Wilson as the councillors. The assessor that year was Thomas J. Clark, tax collector, George Edgar, clerk, L. F. Sharp and H. C. Barwick, the treasurer.

C. EGE

For some time it did not look as if Oxford would get a college but in 1856 the Baptist denomination chose Woodstock as the site for their second attempt at operating a college. The first one at Montreal was forced to close for want of support. Woodstock was chosen over Fonthill and Brantford and Mr. Archibald Burch gave the land and residents of Woodstock and area guaranteed \$16,000 towards the college. The cornerstone was laid on June 23, 1857 and the school opened on the fourth of July, 1860. The tuition for primary and higher departments was \$20 and \$28 per year and the 30 theological students attended without charge.

Girls as well as boys attended this school and it was the first co-educational college in Canada. In 1861 fire destroyed the building but it was rebuilt and in the meantime classes were held in the Woodstock hotel. It was known as the Canadian Literary Institute until 1833 when the name was changed to the Woodstock College and in 1881 the theological department was removed to the Toronto Baptist College on Bloor St. Toronto and eventually in 1887 McMaster University came into being and incorporated all three institutions and for the next 20 years Woodstock College became a prep school for boys. It was about this time that Joe Boyle was sent here to get an education that would enable him to be a minister which was his parent's wish but it was not Boyle's wish and he ran away from school and went to sea. There were many others that graduated from here who made a great name for themselves but Boyle went on to become one of the most famous soldiers of fortune of our time.

KLONDIKE KING

After a short jaunt at sea he returned home and went into the racing business and through this practically controlled Broadway and later ended up in California promoting a prize fighter. From here he took off for the Klondike where through his sheer determination he became known as King of the Klondike and it was through his endeavors that huge dredges were brought into the Yukon. At the outbreak of the War of 1914 he raised a machine gun battalion and took them overseas as their colonel and his pips were of solid gold.

The regiment was disbanded and used as reinforcements and he went to Russia on the Allied Railroad Mission and was decorated for his ability in getting the railroads reorganized before the Revolution of 1917. At the time of the Revolution he

RATHO

got the crown jewels and the cash reserves of Romania out of Russia by camouflaging them in Red Cross baskets and upon arrival became advisor to the Queen of Romania.

No job was too big for him and he had a way of getting it done where others would fail. While he was living in New York he and his brother trained a race horse which won for them \$56,000 and the first thing they did was to wire their mother who was living in Woodstock telling her to buy "The Firs", a house that she had greatly admired and is located across the road from the monument of Springbank Snow Countess at the eastern edge of Woodstock. His life story is told by Kim Beattie in "Brother, Here is a Man" and is in the Woodstock library.

The Woodstock College failed to attract students and by 1926 was forced to close its doors and after attempts by others to use it which failed it was closed and in 1958 was torn down. Today a new vocational school is rising on this spot.

RATHO

Among those who settled at the north end of Blandford were the Peats, Silens, Bairds, Peas Pettigrews, Olivers, Leuszler, Vance, Littles, Cowing and Millers. They were mostly Scottish and the family of Squire Peat still worked the same land and are in possession of the crown land. It was these families that eventually formed the community of Ratho.

As early as 1850 these Scottish settlers were holding meetings of a religious nature and by 1852 they built a church at the crossroads at a cost of \$800 which could seat 350 people. This was about the beginning of the village which was to grow and with the coming of the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad it was to have an upper and lower town, the upper town being at the railroad and the Lower town at the crossroads. The lower town is considered to be a little older as the railroad did not come until 1857.

A post office was opened here on July 1, 1855 with James Thomson as postmaster and continued to operate until 1913 when George Steedman had the post office in the large building which served as a general store and one of the few buildings still standing in Upper town. W. S. Elliott, Joseph Williams, Joseph Morrow also served as postmasters. By 1862 the population had reached about 100 and the village boasted of having a store, two blacksmith shops, shoe shop and a tavern along with the Presbyterian Church with Rev. Andrew Tolmie as pastor.

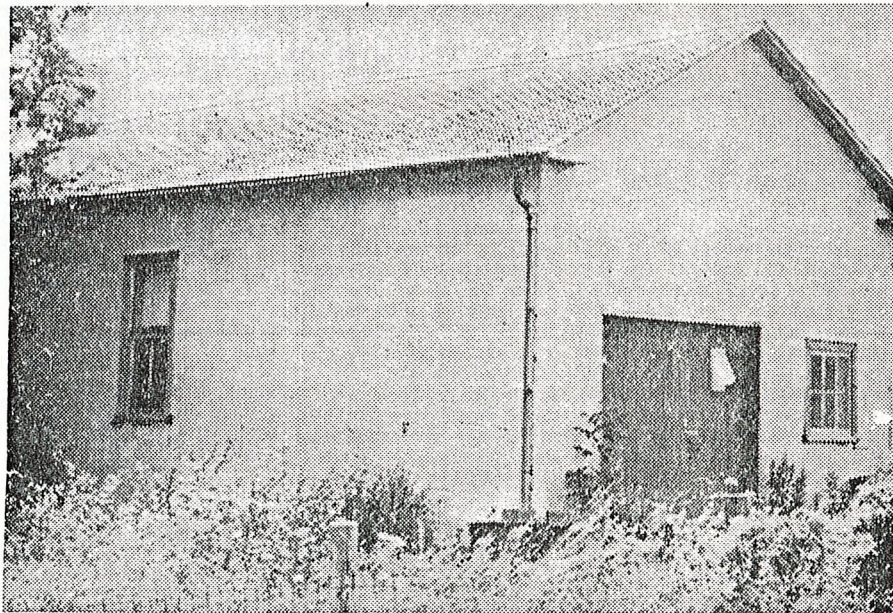
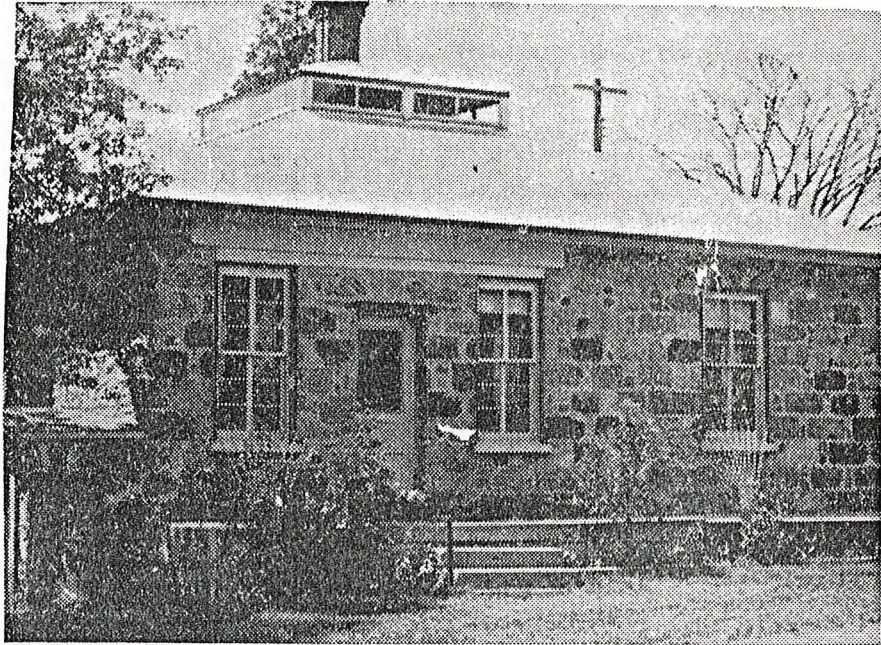
In 1850 a log school served the community which was located on the northeast corner of the Sylvester's farm and in 1880 a school was built on the north side of what is now highway 97 south of the village. Some of the teachers here included Dan Burke, A. Davidson, Halliday, W. Cuthbert, Ede and A. MacMicken. The present school is south of the highway. While a second school was being built the students were educated in the Community Hall at the western edge of Lower Town. This hall was known as the Forester's Hall and was also occupied by the Good Templars and the Patrons of Industry. It is still in use and was used as a polling booth at the last Federal election and is a regular meeting place for quilting bees and annual meetings.

STORES

There was a general store east of the hall at the main corner operated by James Kerr who also operated a shoe shop next to the store while on the opposite side of the road in partnership with John Currie he had a blacksmith shop. George Kerr was the tailor. James Hewitt later became the blacksmith and served this area for 50 years. Another thriving industry here was the carriage works of William Smith who specialized in custom made wagons, carriages and buggies. It was natural for the hotel to be located near the railroad and Ratho was no different. The Blue Dog Hotel was located on the east side of the Upper Town. William Hughes the proprietor would hold dances in the loft over the stables and one night fiddler Jack Brown was a little late in arriving because he forgot that trains don't stop for buggies and was hit by the train but lived to tell the tale. The dance went on as usual.

A milk receiving station was located at the tracks and prior to this a cheese factory had been located near the old log school. The train did not stop here unless it was flagged and it was the duty of the station master to get the mail onto the train by use of the pole method where he would hold the mail up and one member of the train crew would take it off. If they dropped the mail the train would be forced to stop and back up to the station, much to the displeasure of the engineer. The station, which was located near where the turnip factory is now located burned about 1870 and was not rebuilt but later a station was located west of Upper Town on the north side of the track but has now been removed.

Although Upper Town boomed during the era of the railroad, it did not manage to stand the march of time as well as Lower Town and today it is a ghost town while Lower Town is a residential area surrounding the church and cemetery in which may be found the names of some of those who helped make Ratho what it is today.



A FEW OF the buildings of the past are still in use around Ratho. In the TOP photo, this building served many purposes including the general store of Jas. Kerr. The building also contains another

odddity in architecture in the windows of the roof. The building in the LOWER photo is the local hall and in its time served as the Foresters' Hall and was occupied by the Good Templars and the Pa-

trons of Industry. The building is still used for quilting and annual meeting. It also served as a polling booth in the last federal election. (Staff Photo).

By ART WILLIAMS

Previous to the year 1793, the great majority of marriages heretofore contracted in the province of Upper Canada were, according to the law of the land illegal, and the children of such marriages illegitimate. Only such marriages as had been performed by a clergyman of the Church of England was held to be in accordance with the statutes then in force. The children from all other marriages, most of which had been conducted by Military Officers and civil officials could not legally inherit the property of their parents. For the relief of such parties, to make valid all marriages heretofore irregularly contracted, and to provide for the future solemnization of marriage, a Bill was introduced during the second session of the first Parliament of Upper Canada which met at Newark, on Friday June 14th, 1793.

The exclusive position which it was intended the English Church should occupy, as the state endowed Church of Upper Canada, was difficult to maintain as before long the majority of the inhabitants were members of other religious societies. In the year 1798 there were but three clergymen of the Church of England in the Province and most of the marriages contracted by Protestants were performed by Magistrates. Among the Scottish Roman Catholics settled in the Eastern part of the Province there does not appear to have ever been any questions raised as to the rights of Bishop McDonell and his Clergy to unite the members of their congregations in marriage according to the rules and regulations of their Church.

In 1810 the six ministers of the Church of England stationed in Upper Canada each received £100 per annum from the Government and £50 from the society for propagating the Gospel in foreign parts. In 1819 the number of clergymen had increased to 10 and in 1823 to 16. The nearest to Burford at this period was the Rev. R. Leeming, stationed at Ancaster.

RICHWOOD

There is located at the junction of the fifth concession and the east quarter line of Blenheim township a hamlet that has survived the passage of time and bears the name Richwood. This community was originally settled by the English who were presumably of the Baptist faith and it was some 10 years after the first settlers arrived that the first church and cemetery was started.

The first baptist in the township was Jacob Goble who settled on the first concession about 1816. The first settlers at what was later called Marlborough, after the English town of that name, was a squatter by the name of Coe and the first settlers of whom any records were kept were the Records who came here in 1817 from Nia-

gara also the Bawtenheimers.

In 1824 Henry Rupert arrived from New Brunswick and when one of his daughters died shortly after arriving here, he gave land for a cemetery and his brother-in-law Frederick Burnett gave land for a church. This was organized as a regular Baptist Church about 1828 and was first called the First Blenheim Baptist Church and later as Riverside Baptist Church. Others who settled here were Squire Jackson in 1833, Robert Kennedy in 1839, M. B. French in 1837, W. A. Scott in 1857, James Dickson in 1832, Thomas Daniel in 1842, Henry Rupert in 1826, W. J. Stockton in 1823, James Moses and Isaac Innes in 1827 and Henry Daniel in 1823.

The community continued to grow and by 1852 it was one of the few rural communities shown on Shenstone's map of Oxford of 1852 and by 1862 it boasted of a population of 150 and was a station on the Buffalo and Lake Huron Railroad and had two stores, two churches, a school, a hotel and the usual shops such as blacksmith, wagonmakers and cobblers. In the village between 1840 and 1870 were several distinguished families who had reached the social level that a carriage and horses were a must with them and they did much entertaining. A Mr. Smart was a linen (flax) buyer with a New York firm and when at home was always seen in a silk topper, gloves and cut-away coat and gray trousers. Among those who carried on business within the community at this time were the Pines who had the first store, Ogilivies had a tailor shop, Robert Scott had a store, Mr. More was proprietor of the hotel near the station, J. D. Hughson operated the Richwood Exchange Hotel, Henry Munro was a shoemaker and Joseph H. Laycock was the township clerk and Justice of the Peace.

VILLAGE SURVEYED

In 1857 Robert Kennedy laid out the land which he owned to form the village and had James Black survey it and it consisted of 21 lots and the streets were named Queen, King and Head. Each of the lots were two chains long and one chain wide and the streets one chain wide. The lots were numbered from the station towards the south. As the villages became organized, the township council gave each of them either enough lumber for a two plank sidewalk or gravel for a gravel walk.

One settler who made a great contribution to Richwood's success at that time was Joseph Laycock. In 1829 Joseph and Eliza Laycock arrived here from Colne. At first they lived in a small house and eventually there was quite a large family of them and were engaged in the lumbering business with the Laycock mills being established on the third concession on the

vest quarter town line. About 1845 Laycock began building a large three-storey brick house which was completed in 1850 and is still standing. Laycock served as township clerk from 1839 to 1872 and the first township hall in Blenheim was erected on his land. He also donated the land for the school and cemetery and the present church is still on land obtained from the Laycocks in 1861.

RAILROAD

The Buffalo and Lake Huron Railway went through Richwood in 1857 although the survey was made in 1853. The right of way was purchased about this time and while it was being built a settlement of over 100 people sprang up in this vicinity and became known as "the patch". Its residents were made up mostly of Irish laborers and their families who were hired to fill the gravel cars with gravel with shovel and hard manual labor. From these people came Richwood's only mystery.

One of these Irish laborers, who was a heavy drinker, beat up his wife quite frequently and one night she disappeared. An inquest was held but as no body was found at that time, Squire Jackson dismissed the case but years later the workmen were digging gravel and they found the body. They dropped everything and ran. Nobody remembered the name of the woman so her remains were reburied in the Riverside Cemetery and the mystery of the missing woman was considered solved. Some of these laborers stayed after the railroad was completed and names such as Shehecs, Hesters, Muirs, Mitchells, McClures and Aldens became common names.

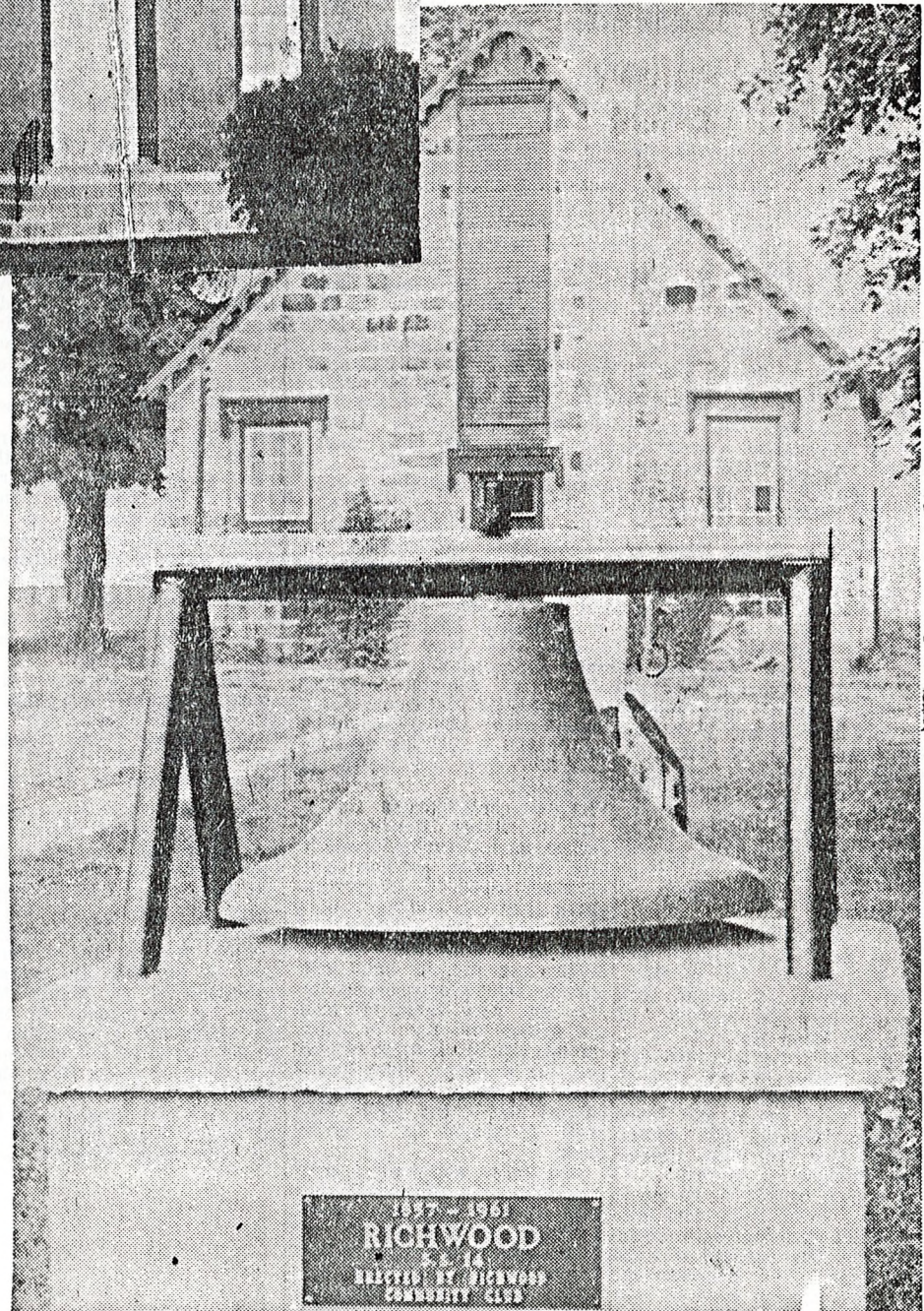
There is no record of the first school in Richwood but prior to 1852 John W. Clinton was a school teacher here coming from Clinton and in 1852 married a local girl so it is pre-

sumed that it was started prior to 1850. The stone school was built about 1857 and was a two room school at one time. In 1875 John Sipperell taught night school for writing. By 1862 it was known as school section number 14 and had an enrolment of 171 with an average attendance of 71. Robert McLean was the teacher. By 1888 the village had a population of 75 and contained two churches, two stores, a wagon shop, shoe shop and two blacksmith shops along with a railroad station for the Grand Trunk Railroad.

It was while Richard Wood

operated the store here that the name was changed to Richwood which was prior to the opening of a post office on the sixth of October, 1851, when C. Piné was appointed postmaster. John Piné, J. H. Laycock, David Kyte, Henry Kloss and Miss Grace E. Kloss also served as postmasters until it was closed on September 30, 1947.

Beside the Baptist Church there was a Wesleyan Methodist Church here being erected in 1861 which has survived the changing times and still serves the community as the Richwood United Church.



IN THE EASTERN part of Oxford County lies a small place called Richwood which has a history dating back to the early 1800s. The TOP

LEFT photo shows the Richwood United Church which was built in 1851. The TOP RIGHT photo shows the old school bell which is now in the form of a memorial. The

bell was placed in front of the school, which was built in 1857, by the Richwood Community Club in 1961. (Staff Photos)

Washington

By ART WILLIAMS

Dr. Connor, the sitting member for the south riding of Oxford, took an office with Brown-Dorion Government and this called for an election in 1858. He was opposed by S. Richards and Gourlay and was elected by a large majority. Gourlay never received a vote for a total of one vote in two elections.

In the election of 1861 there were two candidates for election in the south riding. Dr. Connor and Stephen Richards, with Connor being elected. In the north riding McDougall, the sitting member of the last parliament, was opposed by Isaac Buchanan of Hamilton, whom he defeated by a large majority. McDougall accepted the appointment of Commissioner of Crown Lands and had to return for re-election. He was elected by acclamation.

In 1863 Hon. George Brown represented the south riding while Hope F. McKenzie represented the north riding by defeating John Barwick of Blandford. McKenzie died in 1866 and Thomas Oliver was elected to replace him. Hon. George Brown accepted the appointment of President of the Council in the Coalition Government of 1864 and was obliged to once more to the south riding for re-election and was returned without opposition.

In 1867 Thomas Oliver represented the north riding and Hon. George Brown the south. Oliver was returned in 1872 and E. V. Bodwell took the south riding but in 1874 Col. James A. Skinner was elected for the south riding while Oliver retained the north which he held until his

death in 1880 when James Sutherland of Woodstock was elected to complete his term of office.

ASSEMBLY

These members were all elected to the Legislative Assembly and in 1858 a Legislative Council was formed and George Alexander was elected to represent the Gore and Thames Division comprising of Oxford, part of Waterloo and Norfolk counties. He, along with Oliver Blake, who represented the Thames Division in 1862, were by the Act of Confederation left without a seat but in 1873 Mr. Alexander was called to the Senate of the Dominion Parliament, a tribute to his merits as a statesman and a patriot.

In the township of Blenheim there was an experiment in colonization that was not tried in any other township and by all reports it was successful.

STIMULATE INTEREST

In the 1840's in England, Arthur Mills was striving to stimulate interest in the British Empire and its possibilities as an outlet for the hard pressed lower class to gain a new start in life. He was so sure that it could be made to work that he was willing to put up money and experiment on his own theory of colonization. The location he chose was the Blenheim district in Canada West and a yeoman from Warwickshire, England, Daniel Wakefield, was selected by Mills to lead a band of settlers here.

The agreement that Mills and Wakefield had drawn up is as follows: — In consideration of the sum of £500 paid by the said Arthur Mills to the account

of said Daniel Wakefield with the Canada Company at Toronto the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, the said Daniel Wakefield agrees to repay to the said Arthur Mills, the said sum of \$500 in the following manner, that is to say, that he will on the 1st day of January A.D. 1847 pay to the said Arthur Mills the sum of £5, and on the 1st day of January in each succeeding year, a sum not less than £15 until the whole sum of £500 be fully discharged and the said Arthur Mills, promises so soon as the said sum of £500 shall have been repaid to convey and grant the said land so purchased to the said Daniel Wakefield absolutely into his own possession — and the said Daniel Wakefield further agrees so soon as he can advantageously do so after his arrival in Upper Canada to invest not less than £200 of the said sum of £500 in the purchase of land, to be purchased in the name of and conveyed to the said Arthur Mills, and to transmit any patent deed on consequence of the said land forthwith to the said Arthur Mills at his residence in England at No. 2 Paper Buildings, Temple, London and the said Daniel Wakefield also agrees to apply the residue of the said sum of £500 in manner following, that is to say not more than £100 thereof in the purchase of farm stocks and implements of husbandry, and construction of habitations, and the residue of the said sum of £500 in the maintenance of William Randall J. Hall, James Towneley, J. Struck until the 25th of October 1845 being Old Michaelmas Day at which time they shall be considered to have worked out the expenses of their journey from England defrayed by the said Arthur Mills, and shall afterwards be entitled to reasonable wages besides maintenance so long as they work with the said Daniel Wakefield."

GETS UNDERWAY

The project got under way in 1845 and for several years Wakefield reported to Mills, on conditions and progress being made. His letters present a graphic picture of life in Canada at that time. The party arrived at Boston on May 19, 1845 and in Blenheim on June 17, 1845 where Wakefield purchased 75 acres on lot 11, concession 12 which has about 30 acres cleared and 14 more chopped ready for logging. There was a farmhouse but no barn. There were 25 acres in wheat and four acres in oats. In his letters he states that Galt was his nearest market being 13 miles away, also the nearest post office. Later a post office was mentioned in Ayr. He told Mills that the land was pretty well settled and mostly by English people and that there was no church but a Methodist chapel on the next lot.

In another of his letters he mentioned buying one yoke of oxen for £13, 10s or \$65.00; one span of horses, £33:15:0 or \$163.00; two cows for milking £11, 5s, or \$54.00; two barren cows for feeding, £6:5:0 or \$28.00; seven pigs for feeding, £317:6 or \$18.00; 15 pigs to winter, £4, 18,0 or \$23.00; one wagon, £18,10,0 or \$94.00; one weaving machine, £5,10,0 or \$26.00; two plows for £2,6,0 or \$10.00. While in another letter of January 1846 Wakefield gave Mills information of the cost of buildings. A shanty could be built for 4 or 5 pounds (\$17.00 to \$23.00) while a good log house would cost £16.00 (\$78.00). Laborers wages averaged 2s to 3s per day or £20 (\$97.00) per year. The best hands might get £24 (\$106.00). Carpenters got 4s or 38 cents a day and board.

In his letter of March 20, 1846 Wakefield states the need of a minister. Most of his neighbors were Methodist and at Galt was the nearest church. He also stated that there was a need for a flour and grist mill.

INSPECTS SETTLEMENT

Mills came to Canada in 1846 to inspect his settlement and wrote the following on his views of what was going on in Blenheim in that time. "I am persuaded that much might yet be done to repair past negligence, in the systematic Colonization of this Province though it is impossible now to restore this Country to the position, she might have held if a good system had been adopted from the first. The results of my little colony at Blenheim will be a fair test whereby to try the probable effects of such a scheme on a larger scale. There are now about 20 souls — men, women and children there — I have allotted to each family 50 acres of woodland and have given them wherewithal to build their houses." But as bad as it might seem to be, he continued to send settlers out including Wakefield's parents.

In 1848 Wakefield reports on crops on land owned by Mills. Spring wheat, nine acres; barley, five acres; four acres in peas, eight acres in oats, one-half acre in potatoes, five acres in turnips and 12 acres in hay. The average yield and price was as follows, wheat, 12 bu. at 2s, 9d; barley, 25 bu. at 1s, 10d; oats, 30 bu. at 1s. Wages had increased to 30 to 35 pounds per year; for haying 3s, 9d; in harvest 5s and at all other times 2s 6d to 3s 1d per day.

METHODIST CHAPEL

By February 1849 Wakefield reports that the Methodist Chapel was prospering and a village had been started close by but still no mill had been built. The chapel continued to prosper and in 1858 Henry Reid, a Wesleyan Minister wrote to Mills thanking him for his contribution of £10 and for a bible that he had sent to the Methodist Church at Washington. This Bible is still in use here.

The village of Washington was originally settled by English and Scottish settlers but an American is given credit for naming the village. The survey for the village took place in November 1851 with James Black doing it for A. J. Robertson and Mr. Street of Niagara. The two main streets being Washington and Willmott streets, Washington running north and south and Willmott east and west. Prior to being called Washington it was simply known as "The Corners" but the story is told that an American came here and built a tavern and as the building neared its completion he went up on the roof with a bottle of whiskey and christened it "Washington" (both tavern and village) in honor of George Washington.

Another story tells of the estimable ladies of Plattsville sending their washing here to be done and when asked where they were going they replied "to get their washing done". A third story gives Adam Shark the first postmaster credit for choosing the name when the post office opened here. All these stories are told but little is known which one is correct although the latter one seems more logical, but towns have got their names in stranger ways than these.

By 1862 the village contained two stores, a church, a school, a first class cabinet and chair factory, a tannery, a wagon and blacksmith shop, two shoe shops and a tavern. There was a Temperance Lodge which was organized in 1859, the same year that the Wesleyan Methodist Church was built. The village became a stronghold for the Wesleyan Methodist and always remained the church of the village. The population at that time was approximately 100.

NEW INDUSTRIES

As the village prospered, new industries were started about 1870 to the north of the village a cheese factory began to operate. It was located at the foot of the hill. The tannery was kept busy supplying leather to the two shoe shops, one was located on the site of the present school and the other a little west of the northwest corner of the village. The creek which runs west of the village supplied the water power for a flax mill and for the cabinet and chair factory. The cabinet and chair factory was run by Vogt and Gillies and in the list of professions for the village everybody but the other merchants and professional people were employed here at the factory.

The southwest corner of the village was considered to be the older part as its deed dates back to the Crown in 1802 when a Mr. McDougall received it. In 1859 Elias G. Chamberlain operated a store on this corner which handled just about everything that was required and it was in the hall above this store that the Temperance Lodge met on a Monday evening. To the south of the store there was a brickyard that did much to replace the log cabins and frame shacks with fine brick homes that are still to be found throughout the township. The bricks for homes as far away as Ayr also came from this yard.

Surprising though it may seem, Washington had no rail connections but in the early 70's it was the centre of the large cattle market and cattle would be driven here from quite some distance to be purchased by buyers from Toronto, Buffalo and other large centres. There being no bank here the buyers would carry cash with them and deposit it with the hopkeepers until it came time to pay for the cattle purchased.

The first school was on the brow of the hill west of the village on the north side of the road. It was a typical school of that era only that with an average attendance of about 75 pupils it was necessary to have two rooms and two teachers.

POST OFFICE

The first post office was opened on Feb. 2, 1852 with Adam B. Shark as postmaster. Daniel Wakefield, William Dunn, Walter Robson and Miss May Patton followed him until April 30, 1914 when it was closed in favor of rural mail.

We find that the Methodist chapel mentioned by Wakefield served as the first church and was located at the present cemetery, one mile east of the village but by 1859 a new church was built in the village and dedicated January 1, 1860 and still serves the community. The seats from the first church were used in the Sunday School of the new church and the Bible presented by Mills in 1846 is still used as the pulpit bible.

It seems that all villages lived under the threat of fire breaking out and Washington was no exception. In August 1875 the threat became a reality and all the buildings on the northwest corner down to the creek were destroyed as well as buildings north of the church and some of the east side of Willmot St. Children playing with matches was given as the cause and it was a typical August day with everything as dry as tinder and it only took a spark to create the fire which in more ways than one spelt the doom of the village.

Very little of this part of the village was rebuilt but a Temperance House was built on the corner formerly occupied by the tavern, commonly called the Farmer's Inn. John Mecker operated the Temperance House while Henry Harmer was one of the many operators of the Farmer's Inn. The Temperance House was later destroyed by fire.

By the late 1880's considerable decline in the commercial enterprises was noted with the directory of 1888 listing only a cheese factory, wagon and blacksmith shop, a shoe shop, a hotel and one store, a far cry of what existed here 20 years previous.

Today the village of Washington is just a quiet corner in the township of Blenheim but nearby the farm operated by the members of the Utterite faith keep the village's name in the public eye with their famous geese and noodles which are marketed throughout all of western Ontario.

SENTINEL REVIEW

August 11, 1962

THE JENVEY FILES

Research from the files of Byron G. Jenvey

THE VILLAGE OF WOLVERTON

The village of Wolverton is located on Lot 8, Concession 7, of the Township of Blenheim, Oxford County. The Nith River flows through the village on its southward journey to meet the Grand River at Paris.

Many years after the village had been established the Canadian Pacific Railway served the community with a station to the northwest of the settlement. The village received its name from the first settler, Enos Wolverton, who came there in 1826 at the age of 16 years, from New York State, with his parents.

After living at various locations, he purchased a large farm which became the site of the village. The purchase was made in 1844. He cleared part of this and built a house and sawmill, later adding a grist and flour mill.

In the early 1850's he built a mansion known as Wolverton Hall, which was his residence for many years. The mansion was large and pretentious for those days and represented more of an estate than a home.

The home boasted a staircase which was the wonder of the countryside. It had a beautiful handrail and a balustrade of handsome design. The pieces were steamed to the correct curves and joined with wooden pegs. No nails were used in its construction. It is said that the bricks for the house were hauled from Hamilton in wagons. Wolverton's son and grandson were heirs and occupants of this home.

The villagers erected a Baptist church in 1862 at a cost of \$600, plus a lot of local volunteer labour. Enos Wolverton was one of the main supporters of the project and also one of the first trustees of the property.

At one time the village had a blacksmith shop, a carriage shop and general store. Wolverton village has gone the way of most villages that were off the beaten track. The milling interests, the shops and other small industries have ceased

operations. It is a rural locality for retired people.

The early 50's proved prosperous for Enos. At the peak of the boom in 1855, he sold much of his Wolverton property and moved to Walsingham in Norfolk County where he built a steam-operated sawmill. For a period Wolverton Hall was sublet and for a time it accommodated as many as five families.

Enos's enterprises were not exempt from the economic of 1858. He was forced into bankruptcy. Enos's wife died in 1856 and in 1861 the family returned to Wolverton.

Enos Wolverton had a family of five sons and two daughters. The youngest son, Dr. Newton Milverton was principal of the Baptist College in Woodstock from 1881 to 1886. One would primarily recall this man's brilliant academic achievements and his work as an earnest theologian. Not so well known, are some of his more colorful exploits. At 26-years-of-age, young Newton was studying for the Baptist ministry at Woodstock College. The college was known at the time as the Canadian Literary Institute.

Student ministers, as a rule, provided a service by filling in at small churches in the vicinity, every Sunday.

In the fall of 1872, a village about ten miles southwest of Woodstock planned to combine Thanksgiving with a Baptist revival, which was to last from Thursday to Sunday. Student Newton Wolverton had been invited to take charge of the revival.

Down behind a store a turkey shoot was in progress. An enterprising villager, taking advantage of the season, was making a business of the sport. Those who passed were invited to try their luck with a .22 rifle. The object was to shoot the head off a turkey when it stuck its head up through the bars of a coop behind a rampart, 40 yards away. At 25-cents a shot, the operator was marketing 60-cent turkeys for about \$3 each.

Wolverton

Young Wolverton was urged to try his hand at the sport. The parson however backed off and said that although he had done a little shooting, he had never handled such a rifle.

After considerable pressure, he finally agreed to take three chances, with the stipulation that he be allowed one practice shot. The operator, recognizing easy business, was willing.

The parson paid his fee and accepted the rifle and four cartridges.

He fired a practice shot at a bottle set up at the 40-yard range. To the delight of the crowd, he missed and showed a considerable amount of embarrassment. However Wolverton had ascertained the coefficient of accuracy of that particular rifle at 40 yards to be two-and-a-quarter-inches high and an inch-and-a-half to the left.

Having acquired this necessary information, he proceeded to crack the head off the first turkey, and then the second, and with the next shot, number three. With that he was barred from further competition. He quietly put on his coat and carried off his turkeys as a donation to the Baptist Thanksgiving feast.

What the turkey shoot operator had not known was that the solemn young minister, just a decade before, had served in the Union Army in the American Civil War, and at 16 received acclaim for his uncanny accuracy with a rifle. He was acknowledged at the time, as 'Captain of Sharpshooters', under General Grant.

After the war, back at his home in Wolverton, he had organized the Wolverton Rifle Company and spent much time

INGERSOLL TIMES

May 10 & 17, 1978

By JANE GRIMSHAW
Family Page Editor
The Daily Sentinel-Review
(Last of a four-part series)

For reasons unknown Northeast Oxford seems to be a forgotten region of the county.

Whether it's because the numerous small towns (and I mean small towns) tucked into this area have become isolated by choice or by apathy, or because of their proximity from the pulse of the county has paralyzed communication, the residents of towns such as Drumbo, Wolverton, Richmond and Canning have remained intensely loyal to their corner of the county.

Mary Evans, local history librarian of the Woodstock Public Library, has compiled a map of northwest Oxford which takes you on a winding and picturesque tour of these unique villages.

The first place you hit as you drive north from Woodstock is Innerkip, a charming rural village which until recently had it's own telephone exchange. Just before you come into Innerkip turn right at George Street towards Trout Lake. You might want to spend some time here as it offers diving, fishing and swimming.

RARE ORCHIDS

If you keep heading east you'll come to the Massey-Ferguson conservation area, a nature preserve of rare orchids, hollies and three species of salamanders.

Continuing north and then east again you come to Drumbo. Mrs. Evans says in her pamphlet that Burgess Lake can be glimpsed just before you enter Drumbo. And a glimpse is all you'll get, if you're lucky. Locals chuckle when you call it a lake. It's more of a swamp, they say. Each summer it just about dries itself up.

SLEEPY HAMLET

Continuing northeast from Drumbo the traveller presently find himself atop of a hill overlooking the sleepy hamlet of Wolverton.

Upon entering Wolverton you'll see a sign indicating Village Variety Store. This is the hub of Wolverton.

Just up the street from the store is Wolverton Hall, a stately Regency style home built in 1854 by its owner, Enos Wolverton.

Wolverton originally came from Cayuga County, N.Y., but emigrated to Canada in 1826 when the British government tempted him, with a large tract of land, to settle the area. In 1851 he laid out the plan of the village and that September became its first postmaster. He also owned the town's mill. During the depression following the Crimean War he rented his house and moved to Walsingham Township where he built and operated a steam sawmill. But he returned to

Wolverton Hall in 1861 and died here in 1892.

Wolverton's sons also enjoyed a certain amount of notoriety. Newton Wolverton was the founder of manual training for "shop" courses in the school system and he taught such courses at Woodstock College in 1887. Another son of Wolverton's was a roommate of John Wilkes Booth, the assassin of Abraham Lincoln.

LOTS OF SIDE TRIPS

As you continue in your tour of northeast Oxford a number of side trips are outlined in Mrs. Evan's pamphlet. If you have the time they may turn into exciting jaunts.

The next village you will come to as you wind your way back to Woodstock is Richwood, a tiny community of about 15 families. There was a time when the population was much more. One resident of Richwood said he remembered when the village boasted a number of stores and 10 hotels. All that remains now is a corner store with a gas pump, a church, an old schoolhouse, a cemetery and a couple of houses.

The church and schoolhouse in Richwood are both beautiful old stone structures. The church was built in 1861 and it is believed the school house, which now serves as a community hall, was erected before that date. The church has unfortunately been renovated in a modern fashion but traces of its antiquity can still be seen. About 35 "loyal" families make up its congregation.

Just south of Richwood is the hamlet of Canning. As you proceed west past Princeton, you'll arrive at Horner's Creek, named after Thomas Horner who arrived in 1793 and was probably one of the first white men in the county. He erected a mill on Horner's Creek and had it in perfect running order by 1795. However, the dam gave way and it was two years before he had the mill going again. Perhaps realizing that milling wasn't as easy as he envisioned, Horner decided to try politics and was elected in 1820 as the first member of parliament for Oxford County. He held his job until 1834.

A bit further west from Horner's Creek in the northern part of Benwell Swamp was the

scene of one of Canada's most spectacular and grizzly murders. It was here that Reginald Birchall, alias Lord Somerset murdered Frederick Benwell. Birchall was hanged for the crime at the Woodstock jail in 1890.



NORTHEAST OXFORD, a quiet part of the county, contains a special charm which isolates it from the

rest of Oxford. Left; Wolverton Hall, a stately Regency home built by the village's namesake in 1854,

right; a stone schoolhouse, circa pre-1860, now serves as a community hall in the village of Richwood.